

Silicon Times Report

The Original Independent OnLine Magazine"
(Since 1987)

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The Publisher, Staff & Editors

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From the Editor's Desk...

Second issue of the New Year and already. I've got a squawk or two! I have to agree with Lloyd E. Pulley in his assessment of the alarming number of shareware program authors who simply do not pay full attention to their install/uninstall routines. The trashing of systems has been going on for some time now with many folks trying desperately to recover their system's performance without having to format and re-install everything. I'd love to see a "shabby program/programmer's listing" thus giving our readers the opportunity to avoid problems by avoiding the poorly written stuff.

On another note. many folks saw the ads from a few years ago about the 64bit Atari Jaguar Game Console.. At the same time, many argued whether or not the Jaguar was indeed a 64bit machine or that it was a play on technological terms. Now a brand spanking new travesty is afoot swirling around the Jaguar like a whirlpool in a swill tank. Seems a rather well known liquidator (Tigersoft) has purchased all the remaining unsold Atari Jaguars, games and peripherals. Which is fine. Also, its a great deal if one wants to buy a "64" bit game console with a CDROM and games at a great price. Now comes the rub!! These guys at Tigersoft have set the Jaguar up as something that "has a future"! This is simply not true! It is DEAD.

The Atari Jaguar is as dead as Kelsey's whatevers and the echo of yesterday's applause combined! Tigersoft has, in our opinion, stepped over the line of good advertising and entered the world of doubletalk and fuzzy grey information. As stated.. the price and package deal offered to the purchasing public is a good one but the manner in which it's being offered is horrid. Shame on you Tigersoft! Or, at least your Sales Manager. I put them all in same class as those who had and continue to promise games for the Jaguar. PT Barnum put it all in a very special way.. "There's one born every minute!"

Meanwhile, it was roughly a few years or so ago that this reporter made it very clear Apple appeared to have little or no future with its OS and niche market. A great deal of water has passed by our Crystal Ball

including the PPC, the Performas and all sorts of lurid tales of umpteen million mhz cpu's. Yet here we are, watching Apple's fortune continue to dwindle and its stock become more emaciated with every passing day. Apple's salvation is in but one direction, Microsoft and Windows. be it now or down the road that's definitely the path of least resistance and guaranteed continued corporate life for Apple. Don't be surprised if Apple begins to ship a pure, ultra high performance, Windows machine. And. in the not to distant future, you'll see Apple rejoicing in the revelry of being the company that offered the very best in high performance Windows Machines. Stranger things have already happened in this marvelous computing world. Can you say Word Perfect. King Kahn? Osborne?

Speaking of Osborne, any of you know the Osborne Story? The one that gave rise to the term: "Osborne Syndrome"? (Yes Sir, Leonard was right all along.) Its all about the Osborne Computer Company's Marketing "Genius" who foretold of a great new Osborne soon to hit the market while there were thousands of current models waiting to be sold! Yep! Doomsday for Osborne. This past Christmas sales season is another classic example of the Osborne Syndrome. Everyone Yapping about the Pentium MMX and the big bad 200, 250 and 500Mhz CPUs that are "right around the corner" That folks.. is what happened to all the anticipated Holiday Hardware Sales that failed to materialize. Its simply amazing how the marketing geniuses of today failed to learn from their predecessor's mistakes and blunders. Must history always repeat itself again and again? Must be true when you hear the Marketing Courses in College are really Basket Weaving 101 in disguise. Most of these "marketeers" really haven't a clue.

Ralph...

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STReport is now ready to offer much more in the way of serving the Networks, Online Services and Internet's vast, fast growing site list and userbase. We now have our very own WEB/NewsGroup/FTP Site and although it is in its early stages of construction, do stop by and have a look see. Since We've received numerous requests to receive STReport from a wide variety of Internet addressees, we were compelled to put together an Internet distribution/mailing list for those who wished to receive STReport on a regular basis, the file is ZIPPED, then UUENCODED. Unfortunately, we've also received a number of opinions that the UUENCODING was a real pain to deal with. So, as of October 01, 1995, you'll be able to download STReport directly from our very own SERVER & WEB Site. While there, be sure to join our STR AutoMailer list.

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LATE BREAKING INDUSTRY-WIDE NEWS

Weekly Happenings in the Computer World

Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Net Stocks Sizzle, Fizzle in '96

A handful of Internet stocks ended 1996 with gains ranging from 27 percent to 77 percent. But a majority lost value as the industry experienced an expected shakeout, according to Mecklermedia Corp.'s Internet Stock Index. As a whole, the ISDEX lost 38 percent of its value in 1996 as Wall Street burst the bubble of sky-high values that endured for much of the past 18 months until a market correction hit last summer.

"Nineteen ninety-six was the year that the movers and shakers with staying power separated themselves from the moved and shaken," says Steve Harmon, Mecklermedia's vice president of business development and senior investment analyst "It's those companies that Wall Street wants less hype and more results from." The handful of winners for the year included content, security and commerce companies. C/NET (CNWK) posted a spectacular year-end rally, up more than 24 percent in the three final trading sessions of 1996. C/NET led ISDEX gainers, rising a total 77 percent to \$28.25 per share since its July 2 initial public offering (IPO) price.

With security and hackers on the hot list, leading firewall software maker CheckPoint Software (CHKPF) zoomed from its IPO on June 28 with a 58 percent run to \$22.13 per share on Dec. 31. Rival firewall software maker Raptor (RAPT) also posted strong upside with a 35 percent gain to \$20.25 per share from its IPO price. Search engine Yahoo! (YHOO) made bold forays

into print and international sites rising 32 percent to \$17.13 per share from its IPO price.

National Semi Eyes Risky Steps

Observers say chipmaker National Semiconductor Corp. is considering its riskiest step to-date in its bid to re-vitalize itself. Writing in The Wall Street Journal this morning, reporter Dean Takahashi quotes insiders as saying that within weeks the firm will announce plans to sell or spin off its commodity chip operations into a new company to be called Fairchild Semiconductor.

"Divesting a unit that accounted for 23.3 percent of total revenue last quarter should give National Semi the cash needed to create the state-of-the-art factories and expertise to make custom chips," Takahashi says. The Journal notes that by ordering National Semi's forced march toward the top of the custom chip business, new CEO Brian Halla "is taking a far different, and some say much riskier, course than his predecessor, Gilbert Amelio," who now heads Apple Computer Inc.

While those moves gained Amelio praise -- and provided fodder for a book he wrote on management -- some say they weren't enough. For instance, Peter Sprague, former longtime chairman of National Semi, told the paper, "Gil's turnaround made National into little more than an industry follower. At least this new CEO is taking risks that could make the company a leader." In fact, with National Semi's earnings trailing industry pacesetters like Intel Corp., Sprague and others say it is time for some truly decisive moves, writes Takahashi.

Apple Expects \$150 Million Loss

An operating loss of up to \$150 million in its fiscal first quarter is expected by Apple Computer Inc., which is reporting weak demand for its Performa consumer line hurt revenue. Business writer Catalina Ortiz of The Associated Press says the computer maker predicts revenue will be 10 percent lower in the three-month period ended Dec. 27 than in the prior quarter.

"Apple said expected shortages of new PowerBook portables will also cut revenue, in addition to the domestic demand softness for its Performas," Ortiz adds, noting Apple cut the price of its Performas up to 30 percent last fall in an attempt to boost sales and market share. Says AP, "Consumers in general have been deferring personal computer purchases. They also are apparently still cautious about buying from Apple because of the company's recent financial troubles and big corporate changes last year."

As a result, Apple Chairman Gil Amelio said additional restructuring steps now appear necessary, noting, "These results suggest that we need to reduce Apple's cost infrastructure so that we can achieve break-even results at a revenue level of \$8 billion." AP says Apple had revenue of \$9.83 billion for the fiscal year that ended in September. That figure, however, was 11 percent lower than the year before.

Apple Stock Takes Tumble

So far, Apple Computer Inc. is having a very bad new year. The computer maker started this day with its stock tumbling 17 percent by noon as investors lost confidence in the firm's prospects. Adding to the difficulty, several analysts now are advising their followers to avoid the stock. "Hope faded on Wall Street for a short-term turnaround in the

computer maker's fortunes and further darkened the company's long-term outlook," writes reporter Eric Auchard of the Reuter News Service. Several brokerages, he reports, have urged investors to dump the stock, "with Wall Street analysts turning gloomy about the ability of Apple management to put the company's business strategies in order."

As noted earlier, Apple has reported it expects an operating loss of up to \$150 million in its fiscal first quarter, news that made Apple the most actively traded Nasdaq issue this morning with more than 10 million traded. By noon, Apple had fallen four points to 17-3/4. "You can't dismiss this as a one-time issue," Montgomery analyst Kurt King told Auchard. "It really does say something about Apple's long-term position in the consumer market." King has maintained his hold rating on the stock.

However, Bear Stearns analyst Andy Neff told the wire service he has cut Apple to unattractive from hold and suspended his estimates on the company "until we have better visibility on earnings." And Prudential analyst Don Young said he cut his rating to hold from buy and slashed his estimate for fiscal 1997.

Says Reuters, "Beyond the earnings disappointment, analysts expressed concern over the impending onslaught of rival machines that will be based on new multimedia chip technology from Intel Corp. and will run Microsoft Corp. Windows software." Adds Auchard, "The latest financial disappointment is likely to deepen Apple's image problems among PC buyers, where widespread doubts have lingered about the company's ability to compete with rival PCs that run Windows software."

Businesses Said to Be Mac Shy

Word is that as more doubts swirl around struggling Apple Computer Inc., technology purchasing managers are having a hard time getting their bosses to approve big orders of Macintosh computers. Reporting from San Francisco the Reuter News Service comments, "Industry experts and consultants say some large corporate customers are questioning whether or not they should invest in Apple computers, or purchase rival PC's powered by Intel Corp. chips and Microsoft Corp. software."

Jeff Lauterette, technical support engineer at EPI Systems, a big Macintosh dealership based in Rockville, Md., told the wire service lots of his customers are shying away from Apple, even though the Mac offers better performance in certain applications, Lauterette added. As noted earlier, Apple has reported it expects an operating loss of up to \$150 million in its fiscal first quarter, news that caused Apple stock to plunge as much as 21 percent yesterday, investors' first chance to react to Apple's disclosure.

Analysts told Reuters the bad news puts Apple in a spiral where each time it reports disappointing earnings, more customers shy away, leading to more losses in future quarters. "It's definitely a fight," said consultant Donald Laird, who advises companies about technology purchases. "Very seldom do I go into a shop where they're as objective (about technology) as I'd like them to be." And, as reported yesterday, adding to the difficulty, several analysts now are advising their followers to avoid the stock.

Apple Launches New OS Effort

Apple Computer Inc. officials are assuring their users that Macintosh computers bought today will be able to run a new generation of operating

system software the company is developing with the help of recently acquired NeXT Software Inc. According to the Reuter News Service, while Apple is working on the new software, it also will release improved versions of the existing Macintosh operating system -- dubbed System 7 -- later this month and in early summer.

"Let me assure you," said Ellen Hancock, Apple's head of development, "that System 7 is not going to be abandoned," and that this year "will be the biggest year ever in releasing system software." Reuters reporter Kourosh Karimkhany in San Francisco notes that in recent months, Apple has been criticized for not moving quickly enough to improve the Macintosh operating system. While Microsoft Corp. has released two major revisions of its Windows operating system in the past two years, Apple has not overhauled the Macintosh System 7 software since 1991.

As reported, Apple, in order to get an overhaul effort going quickly, agreed last month to buy NeXT Software for \$400 million. Apple will use NeXT's software technology to write a next-generation operating system for the Mac. "Since the announcement of the acquisition," says Reuters, "Apple customers have been worried that software they have bought for System 7 would not work with a NeXT-based operating system."

But Hancock said, "We do see System 7 enhanced and supported for the next several years. We do have a dual operating system strategy." She said Apple will release later this month an improved version of System 7, code-named Harmony. Apple will release another System 7 revision -- dubbed Tempo -- in early summer. Hancock did not say when the next-generation operating system -- code named Rhapsody -- will be released. Other Apple executives said it could be as early as late 1997.

Net Set for 'Unprecedented Growth'

International Data Corp. is predicting "unprecedented growth" in the use of the Internet and the World Wide Web on a global scale. Research conducted by the Framingham, Massachusetts, market researcher reveals this growth will be accompanied by an increase in the number of users that buy and sell goods and services available on the World Wide Web; this growth will drive commerce on the Internet to \$100 billion in 2000. According to IDC, the amount of commerce being conducted over the Internet was around \$3 billion in 1996, with more than one-third of those purchases completed on the Web itself. Additional key findings include:

- '• The number of devices accessing the Web will grow from 12.6 million worldwide at year-end 1995 to 233.3 million at year-end 2000.
- '• The number of users accessing the Web will grow from 16.1 million at year-end 1995 to 163.0 million at year-end 2000.
- '• The percentage of users buying goods and services on the Web will grow modestly -- from 24 percent in December 1995 to 28 percent in December 2000. This modest growth, says IDC, is only the result of the influx of international users; in the U.S., the percentage of users who are "buyers" will grow from 29 percent to 45 percent.
- '• IDC's primary research indicates that already one-third of Web transactions are completed over the Web (as opposed to fax or phone). By 2000, that fraction should be much greater than two-thirds, says IDC.

Thirty-six million U.S. households will be online by the year 2000, forecasts Jupiter Communications. The New York market researcher says widespread improvements in network infrastructure, increasing bandwidth, improved usability of Internet browsers and the growth of consumer-oriented content will together drive Internet and online service usage in the home. Jupiter estimates that approximately 14.7 million U.S. households are now online.

Jupiter says online development will also be driven by continuous growth in the PC marketplace. The company predicts that PC penetration in the U.S. will be 55 percent by the year 2000. It notes that Internet market growth is also tied to information appliances, which will appeal to consumers who don't need the features of a PC. By the year 2000, Jupiter projects that 16 percent of Internet access will be from non-PC devices, and television will emerge as the premier non-PC access device.

"The three major facets of consumer Internet access -- browsers, devices, and bandwidth -- are going to experience massive shifts before the end of the century," says Ross Scott Rubin, Jupiter's Internet group director. "Internet service providers and hardware developers are moving aggressively to make it easier and cheaper to access the Internet. Meanwhile, a revolution in active information delivery and easy access to the Internet from new computers are opening the doors for millions of new customers." Visit the Jupiter Web site at <http://www.jup.com>.

Survey: Home PCs Rob Leisure Time

More than 37 percent of home PC users say that any increased productivity gained from having the ability to work at home has come at the expense of leisure time, according to NFO Research. While 86 percent of the people the Greenwich, Connecticut, company surveyed said the ability to work from home has increased their productivity, survey respondents also provided the following comments about the resulting impact on leisure time:

- ' "There's no escaping 24-hour requests."
- ' "More companies now expect employees to be available at all times."
- ' "Co-workers feel more free to call at home with questions at any time."
- ' "It's harder to keep compartments of my life separate."
- ' "I end up taking things home that I should have left at work."
- ' "I can't get away from work!"

"Due to the immediacy of transmitted information, there is an implicit expectation that your response will also be made sooner," said one of the respondents. "This can be disruptive to organized work patterns, and it subtly encourages employees to do a little extra work at home." Nearly 300 people on a panel assembled by NFO responded to questions concerning the impact of in-home, remote access to work-related computer systems. "These survey results indicate that new computer and communications technologies are helping people be more flexible and more productive, but they also show the need for employers to recognize the full effect the technology has on people's lives outside of work," says Charlie Hamlin, NFO's executive vice president of interactive business development.

Info Tech Spending Seen Rising

Spending on information technology products and services is expected to continue to increase in 1997, but the growth rate will decline for a second straight year. That is the estimate of International Data Corp. of Framingham, Massachusetts, where researchers and consultants also told

United Press International the Internet will continue to replace the personal computer as the engine of growth for the information technology industry, but that the Net expansion will be plagued with major growing pains. IDC chief technology forecaster Frank Gens predicts:

- '• Spending on IT products and services will grow to more than \$700 billion in 1997 -- a 12.3 percent increase, but down from 1996's 14.1 percent growth.
- '• Worldwide PC spending will grow 15.5 percent to \$182.5 billion, down from 20 percent growth in 1996 and 32 percent growth in 1995.
- '• The business market becoming saturated, information technology leaders will need to explore "the uncharted frontier -- the mass market."
- '• The Internet will once again drive the IT market in 1997, when Web users will double to more than 68 million. He says 90 percent of the largest companies will have a Web site, and transaction volume over the Web will increase by 400 percent.
- '• Fifteen to 20 percent of users will this year "turn off" the Web, 25 to 30 percent of commercial Web sites will die or stagnate, and local loop and Internet service provider congestion will continue to plague users.

Adds UPI, "He predicts the action in 1997 will be with Internet access providers and online services, and to look for decreases in consumer Internet access pricing."

Multimedia Chip PCs to Debut

Look for PC makers this week to simultaneously roll out new multimedia PCs built around a much-touted new chip by Intel Corp. Reporter Therese Poletti of the Reuter News Service says the move is likely to "give the consumer sector of the industry a much-needed boost." Intel is set on Wednesday to officially launch its P55C microprocessor, with its o-called MMX (multimedia extension) technology and, says Poletti, "A slew of companies will roll out consumer PCs, notebooks and desktops using the new chip, which offers much faster performance than earlier designs."

Analyst David Wu of Chicago Corp. said the MMX impact will be significant in the second half, adding, "I should hope it helps -- the corporate world is strong and the retail world is very weak." Reuters says consumer anticipation of the new PCs is cited as one reason retailers have lately shown weaker-than-expected sales, as savvy computer buyers waited for next "big thing" to hit the market. Compaq Computer Corp., Dell Computer Corp., Gateway 2000 Inc., Toshiba America Corp., Sony Corp, IBM and other companies are expected to unveil new high-end PCs, priced at more than \$3,000.

Packard Bell Debuts Low-End PC

Targeting the roughly 65 percent of American homes without a personal computer, Packard Bell NEC Inc. has introduced a \$999 Pentium-based PC. The Packard Bell C115 includes a 120MHz Pentium processor, 16MB of EDO RAM, a 1.2GB hard drive, an 8X CD-ROM drive, a 33.6 K bps data/fax modem and a 14-inch color monitor. The C115 is also available without monitor

"Our vision is to make a personal computer affordable for every home," says Beny Alagem, chairman, president and CEO of Packard Bell NEC Inc., based in Sacramento, California. "By providing an entry-level PC from a top manufacturer in the sub-\$1,000 price range, Packard Bell will help

non-users take that first step to PC ownership." The model is available now on retailers' shelves, according to Alagem.

Microsoft Releases Mac Explorer

Microsoft Corp. has released a Macintosh version of Internet Explorer 3.0. The software giant says its Web browser offers Macintosh users "faster and wider access to Internet content over competitive browsers while running in as little as 4MB of memory." The software includes Java support, ActiveX Controls, HTML enhancements, cross-platform multimedia support and a customizable toolbar.

"The Microsoft Internet Explorer for Macintosh development team had a single vision -- to make the best browser for the Macintosh," says Brad Silverberg, senior vice president of Microsoft's applications and Internet client group. "Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.0 delivers on that vision, providing more features and supporting more native Macintosh technologies than any other browser."

Intel Unveils Pentium MMX

Intel Corp. today unveiled its much-anticipated Pentium processors with multimedia extension (MMX) technology. The chips are designed to offer users PCs with improved graphics, video and audio features. According to the chip maker, 166MHz and 200MHz MMX Pentium processors for desktop computers will cost PC makers \$407 and \$550 per chip, respectively, in 1,000-unit quantities. For mobile computer applications, low-power 150MHz and 166MHz Pentium MMX chips will sell for \$443 and \$550, respectively, in 1,000 unit quantities.

Among the PC makers immediately announcing Pentium MMX systems are Acer America, Compaq Computer Corp., Dell Computer Corp., Gateway 2000 Inc., Hewlett-Packard Co., IBM Corp. and Toshiba America Information Systems Inc. Most of the new models are shipping now or later this month.

Sharp Debuts New Zaurus

Sharp Electronics Corp. has taken the wraps off of its latest Zaurus handheld computer-communicator, the ZR-3500X. The unit, which is scheduled to ship in late February for \$499, offers a built-in 14.4K bps data/fax modem, Internet e-mail access, Windows 95 synchronization software and a PC link cable. Other features include a backlit illuminated display, 1MB of RAM and 1MB of flash memory. Built-in word processing and spreadsheet applications are compatible with Microsoft Word and Excel file formats.

"The ZR-3500X is ideal for business users because it is uniquely designed to work both as a stand alone device, as well as a PC companion with powerful communications and Windows 95 synchronization capabilities," says Mary Repke, director of marketing for Sharp's consumer business products group.

Canon Quitting PC Business

Canon Inc. is leaving the PC business and will stop making its Innova notebook line. The company, based in Tokyo, says annual Innova sales were only about \$8.6 million to \$17 million, a small part of its overall business. The company will continue to sell Canon brand computers produced under an agreement with a Taiwanese PC manufacturer. It will also continue to market PC printers. Canon also says it will sell its 20 percent stake in NeXT Software Inc. The company, headed by Apple Computer co-founder

Steve Jobs, was purchased last month by Apple for \$400 million.

Japan's Chipmakers Plan Boost

By the end of 1997, combined monthly production of higher capacity computer chips will be increased by 10 times by five Japanese semiconductor manufacturers. In Tokyo, Nihon Keizai Shimbun, Japan's leading business daily, reported the five will expand monthly production of 64-megabit DRAM chips to 7.5 million units by December from 700,000 at the end of last year.

Citing unnamed company officials, the paper identified the producers as NEC Corp., Toshiba Corp., Hitachi Ltd., Fujitsu Ltd. and Mitsubishi Electric Corp., noting the companies currently account for more than 40 percent of world DRAM production. The Associated Press observes that NEC alone produced 500,000 of the DRAMs each month at the end of 1996. By the end of 1997, it said NEC plans to manufacture between 3 million and 5 million units a month.

Firm Issues Hacker Challenge

RSA Data Security Inc. is challenging hackers and others to decipher encrypted messages on the Internet. The Redwood City, California, company says it wants to test the security offered by the government-endorsed DES encryption standard and other secret-key ciphers at various key sizes. Prizes of up to \$10,000 will be awarded for the recovery of each of 12 keys with lengths varying from 40 bits up to 128 bits. In contests it has sponsored since 1991, RSA has paid out over \$100,000 in prizes to mathematicians, hackers and other computer experts worldwide. RSA says full details of the competition will be posted on its home page (<http://www.rsa.com/>) during the first weeks of January.

French vs. English on the Net

Can France's laws aimed at promoting the French language and culture reach into cyberspace? In Paris, a court this week hears a legal challenge by two private French groups against an Internet site set up by the French campus of an

American university, written entirely in English. Writing for the Reuter News Service, reporter Irwin Arieff quotes officials of Georgia Tech Lorraine, part of the Georgia Institute of Technology, as saying the Internet site is in English because all its courses are taught in English and all its students are required to be fluent English-speakers.

"But," says Arieff, "the campus in Metz, eastern France, happens to be in a country which has for the past two years waged an uphill battle against the Anglo-Saxon domination of cyberspace." Reuters says France's 3-year-old Toubon law requires that all advertising in France be in French. While an ad can feature other languages as well, it must be translated into French. Says Arieff, "Experts in the largely uncharted field of cyberspace law are looking to the Georgia Tech Lorraine case for clues to the future course of cyberspace regulation around the world."

The complaint was filed by two private Paris-based associations, Defense of the French Language and Future of the French Language, which say they fear for the future of French culture in an English-dominated world and see the Internet as simply the latest Anglo-Saxon menace to their national language and traditions. The Georgia Tech Lorraine site (<http://www.georgiatech-metz.fr>) offers course descriptions, a guide to the campus and other information useful to current and potential students and

provides access to Internet pages put together by some of the 29 students listed on the site.

Arabs Worry About the Internet

A United Arab Emirates police chief says he worries about Arabs being able to chat with Israelis over the Internet. Speaking with the English-language Khaleej Times on the sidelines of an information seminar in the UAE capital Abu Dhabi, Dubai Police Chief Dhahi Khalfan Tamim said, "Computer-users in the UAE and other Arab states can chat with Israelis on the Internet and exchange important information."

The Reuter News Service comments, "The UAE, a conservative Gulf Arab state in which newspapers, magazines, books and films are censored, is also anxious about the spread of pornography over web sites." In response, Tamim said the UAE telecommunications giant Etisalat, which provides access to the Internet, had launched a new plan to combat pornography and other "undesirable material" on the rapidly growing computer web.

Said Tamim, "As more computer users are linking up to Internet in the UAE, the spread of undesirable material among the country's youths will become more visible. This will require the intervention of the authorities." He said Etisalat has said it would disconnect any customers who abused Internet services and violated "order and clear laws" of the UAE.

America Online Halts Russia Access

America Online Inc. has closed its doors to users in Russia, reports Russia's Itar-Tass news agency. According to Itar-Tass, the online service barred access in response to "credit card machinations by Russian clients." The news agency says Russian callers to America Online are receiving a message stating, "Communication with the Russian Federation is not Available at the Moment." An America Online spokeswoman told Itar-Tass that an investigation is continuing. America Online has not stated how long the ban will continue.

AOL Hacker Pleads Guilty

America Online Inc. is celebrating the conviction of Nicholas Ryan, a computer hacker known as "Happy Hardcore." Ryan today pled guilty in U.S. District Court in Alexandria, Virginia, to a felony offense under the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act. A computer science student at Yale University, Ryan illegally accessed AOL and engaged in fraudulent activities. According to the online service, Ryan first became known in the hacker community after writing a piece of illegal software called "AOL4FREE," which allowed hundreds of people to use the service illegally. AOL says it has upgrade its security measures to prevent AOL4FREE or any similar software from working. After detecting the illegal activity and assembling evidence against the hacker, AOL says it notified the Secret Service, which commenced an investigation culminating in today's guilty plea.

Bill Would Block Net Taxes

A Senate Democrat and a House Republican are promising they will introduce legislation to keep the Internet free of new state and local taxes, including new sales and usage taxes. Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Oregon) and Rep Chris Cox (R-California) told the Reuters news service that their bill would "stop new cyber-taxes in their tracks." The measure also will call on the Clinton administration to develop a comprehensive plan to address

the issue of electronic commerce taxes.

"Allowing a helter-skelter approach to taxing electronic commerce could harm hundreds of thousands of businesses and millions of consumers," said Wyden. "The best approach will be one that is well-thought out, fair and assures growth in electronic commerce." He added that the absence of cyber-tax legislation "could risk the development of a hodge-podge of overlapping, conflicting and burdensome taxes that will hurt American businesses and consumers."

Shareware Focus STR Feature Presenting the Latest Goodies

Shareware Treasure Chest

By Lloyd E. Pulley

I've only been a PC/Windows95 owner for just a few months but in that time, I've already become addicted to it's power and features. But I have a major gripe with much of the PC software, whether it be shareware, commercial, or freeware, and that's the developers not using Windows95 'Install/Uninstall' feature properly. With all of the shareware programs that I d/l and try, my system is constantly being cluttered up with pieces and bits of software that didn't get uninstalled properly. Not only that but when I take a look at my Registry, I see references to programs that I uninstalled but that didn't clean up the Registry properly when they uninstalled themselves. I just spent three days re-formatting my hard drive and resetting my regular programs up from scratch just because of this reason (why it took me three days is the subject of a complete column <g>).

I've tried some of the 'Uninstal' programs and haven't found any of them to be that good. Some are better than others, some work pretty decent on commercial/major name stuff, but none works as good as what I want. Naturally, everyone tells me, "You bought the wrong ones. You should have bought 'XXX' or 'XYZ' and it would have worked." How many more 100's of dollars do I have to spend to try and find a program that does what the software developers should have done in the first place - clean up properly after themselves?

When I had my Atari ST, I used to d/l a lot of software and try it - whether I thought it was something I might need or not. Most (95%+) got tried once or twice and went into the trash. But many of the pieces of software that I ended up using (and buying) were ones that I didn't think I'd want/need at first, but after giving them a try, I found out that I needed/wanted them - and bought them. Nowadays, I have to really be interested in a piece of software to give it a try. I have to wonder how many potential sales/customers the software developers are losing because they don't impliment the uninstall part of their software properly.

Cudos to the developers of 'Wallaby for Windows 95' (which was in last week's shareware column). After trying their software and then uninstalling it, I found that it had left my system 'dirty'. I contacted them and within 24 hours they got back to me with the fix for the problem, plus had fixed their uninstaller program so that it worked properly.

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
Stuffit Expander - 1.0	1/9/97	346k	Freeware

StuffIt Expander for Windows expands files from the most popular archiving and compression formats found online, including StuffIt (.sit) and ZIP (.zip). StuffIt Expander will also expand files in uuencoded (.uae), BinHex (.hqx), and MacBinary (.bin) formats, such as those commonly found on the Internet. Other archive formats supported include ARC (.arc), Arj (.arj), and gzip (.gz). StuffIt Expander will also expand self-extracting archives created by StuffIt, ZIP, and Arj.

Download Site -<http://www.aladdinsys.com/consumer/expander1.html>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
After Dark Online 1.05 for Win95	1/9/97	2.01mb	Freeware

After Dark Online is a collection of screen savers that bring news and information from top sources on the Web directly to your desktop. Get news from sources you know and trust: DBC Financial News, Sports Illustrated Online, USA Today, The Wall Street Journal, Journal Interactive Edition, and ZD Net Computing Central. After Dark Online also gives you stock quotes and sport scores. Best of all you customize the news you want, and you determine how often the news is updated

Download Site -<http://www.afterdark.com/index.html>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
Liquid Music Player 32-bit - 1.0	1/9/97		Free

Provides a media-rich musical experience which allows users to view art, lyrics and credits as well as production, agency and copyright information while listening to high-fidelity music on the Internet. In addition to the media browsing features, the free Liquid MusicPlayer makes it simple to download true CD-quality Dolby Digital encoded songs, or direct you to ordering information to add the disc to your home collection.

Download Site -<http://www.liquidaudio.com/>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
Coupon Clipper's Accountant - 1.0	1/6/97	3900k	Nagware \$10.00

Coupon Clipper's Accountant can help you organize your coupon portfolio by category. This application allows online entry and updates to the coupon data base. Online lists of All Coupons, Coupons that have Expired, Coupons that expire this Month, Coupons that expire this Week, Grocery Coupon List, and Coupons History are available as online or printed reports. Coupon Clipper's Accountant has online helps as well as full documentation included as part of the extracting zip file.

Download Site - <http://www.win.net/fluffware/welcome.html>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
Microsoft Internet Mail and News 1.0	1/8/97	1002k	Freeware

The latest release (1/3/97 release)! Now helps you find your friends on the Internet with its access to 4 White Pages Directory Services. Some of it's other features are: It's easy to set up and configure using Microsoft Wizard technology, Binary attachments are automatically decoded, You can use Microsoft Office 95 spell checking (if Office 95 is installed), and the ability to personalize your mail with automatic signatures. Requires IE 3.01 Final Version.

Download Site - <http://www.microsoft.com/ie/imn/>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
Disk Space Usage Analyzer - 1.1	1/5/97	1600k	Freeware

Reads local drives and displays how much space is being taken up under each subdirectory off of the root. Even counts hidden and system directories. Shows how much drive space is being lost to the file system due to cluster sizes related to the size of the hard drive.

Download Site - <http://wint.sdic.com/kfayal/dsua.htm>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
Great Battles of Alexander for Win95 Demo	1/2/97	19.2mb	Commercial

The armies of ancient Greece are amassed against you. On the rocky battle plain at Charonaea, you and your father stand against seemingly insurmountable odds. Defeat will doom you to obscurity. Victory will herald the beginning of the most spectacular military campaign in history, one that will carry you from Greece to Africa and Asia. The entire known world can be yours to conquer! Take command of the legendary armies of Macedonia. Conquer the rebellious Greeks. Crush the defiant Persians. Capture the crowns of kings and pharaohs to earn the most exalted title of all: Alexander the Great.

Download Site - <http://www.imagicgames.com/alexander.dir/alexander.html>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
Ez-Unzipper - 1.5	1/6/97	2000k	Shareware \$15.00

Ez-Unzipper is the smartest, fastest and easiest way to zip and unzip files in Windows. Just a few clicks of a button and your files are

unzipped. Now includes an Unzipping Wizard and it also creates self-extractors.

Download Site - <http://www.gma-soft-tech.pair.com/>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
DocClear - 1.0	1/8/97	116k	Freeware

A small, configurable program that sits in the system tray and a) clears the Documents menu when you choose, or b) clears the Documents menu at a specified interval.

Download Site - <http://www.sitedev.com/>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
365 Days of Windows 95 Tips & Tricks - 1.1.1	1/7/97	565k	Freeware

Steve Jenkins, founder of the Windows95.com Web site provides a useful tip or trick every day. From the newbie to the power-user, his calendar will help you master the ins and outs of Microsoft's 32-bit operating system.

Download Site - <http://www.visionx.com/ddwin.htm>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
QuickColor for NT 4.0 and Windows 95 - 2.0	01/2/97	200k	Shareware \$20.00

QuickColor for Windows 95/NT - a display control utility, supporting dynamic color depth, resolution, and refresh rate switching, with user-defined presets, program/shortcut associations, an optional toolbar and extensive monitor support.

Download Site - <http://www.entech.com.tw/>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
Ultragammon - 1.2	1/7/97	1.1 meg	Commercial Demo \$35.00

Ultragammon is a interactive virtual skill game for the PC that rivals the classics such as Backgammon. Ultragammon sports stunning pre-rendered 3D graphics, 3 Skill Levels, and various game play options. The game builds on the foundation of the masters and offers immense variety in its tactics.

Download Site - <http://www.intermart.co.nz/ultra.htm>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
Meg 97 - 2.0	1/8/97	400k	Shareware

Meg is a complete system monitor and disk utility designed exclusively for Windows 95. Features include: Intuitive interface. Starting with simple disk and memory pie graphs you drill down by clicking for additional information. Extensive help features for easy use, including pop up help. Six separate memory graphs, including Real, Virtual, and total memory. Memory task list which shows what Windows 95 is currently running. All Disk screen showing pie graphs of all of your drives at once. Disk space graphs. Display in space totals in Mb, Kb, or Bytes, and more.

Download Site - <http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/mrvegas/>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
Pegasus Mail - 2.52	1/7/97	1.5 meg	Freeware

UPGRADE - A really good E-mail program that's free. It has a lot of nice features like a spelling checker, mailing list support, and much more.

Download Site - <http://www.pegasus.usa.com/>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
Sleep Corners - 1.0	1/6/97	10k	Freeware

Sleep Corners is a small utility you keep in your system tray that lets you activate or disable your screen saver by putting the cursor into one of the corners of you desktop. There are other screen saver utilities out there, but Sleep Corners has some useful features the others don't.

Download Site - <http://www.et.byu.edu/~melanded/SleepCorners/>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
Eudora Light - 3.0.1 Beta	1/5/97	4000k	Free beta

This is the beta version of Eudora Light 3.01. Expires January 31, 1997. New features like filters, Capability-Enhancing Plug-ins, Drag & Drop Capabilities, and Floating Dockable Mailbox Window.

Download Site - <http://www.eudora.com/winlight301b.html>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
WinHacker 95 - 2.0 beta 3	1/8/97	900k	Shareware

WinHacker 95 is THE best utility that you can use to configure the hidden Windows 95 (and Windows NT 4.0) settings. Many of the settings that change

the way Windows 95 works and feels are hidden in the overwhelming registry, or in configuration files. WinHacker 95 give you a easy way to configure those settings through the GUI (graphical user interface).

Download Site - <http://www.wedgesoftware.com/>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
Modem Logger - .45	1/8/97	1500k	Freeware

A program that automatically detects if you use the modem on the selected comm port. It takes note of your calls on a log file and lets you see the total call time and other information. Very simple configuration.

Download Site -

<http://www.adbbs.shiny.it/sitiweb/abbonati/kirysweb/software/mlog/>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
Super Ice Qube Hopper - 1.3	1/6/97	1969k	Shareware \$19.00

Classic Arcade Style game based upon Q*Bert in a 90's environment. Hop from Qube to Qube cracking them while avoiding Snow Balls, Snow Men, and Seals! Digital Voice, Digital Sound, High Resolution Graphics using DirectX. Many screens, and construction set to make your own levels!

DirectX Setup (4.3 MB) is needed.

Download Site - <http://www.playport.com/>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
WinPack 32 Deluxe - 1.30	1/7/97	1000k	Shareware \$20.00

WinPack32 Deluxe support ZIP, GZIP, TAR, Lharc, UUENCODE, BINHEX, ARJ, and ZOO. Features include, ability to view any file type within an archive, archive conversion, built-in self-extractor, drag-n-drop, recursive subdirectories, and zip decryption.

Download Site - <http://www.rdsretrospect.com/>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
ListFonts - 1.2	1/7/97	160k	Freeware

ListtFonts lists your fonts on CD or already installed in your system. Print only selected fonts in your printer or on preview panel. Easy and beautiful!

Download Site - <http://www.cbpf.br/~marcoscm/listfonts>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
Norton Antivirus Definitions Updates - January	1/6/97	775k	Freeware

Monthly updates for your Norton Anti-Virus program.

Download Site - <http://www.symantec.com/avcenter/index.html>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
MSNBC News Alert - 1.0	1/5/97	250k	Freeware

Stay informed of breaking news as it happens with MSNBC News Alert. For users with a direct network connection to the Internet, MSNBC News Alert quietly monitors their news site, watching for breaking news and stories on topics that you preselect from today's headlines. MSNBC News Alert is absolutely free and runs quietly in the background, alongside the clock featured in the Windows 95 or Windows NT 4.0 Task Bar. It provides notification of new alerts by either flashing the Alert icon or popping the actual news headline in the preview window.

Download Site - <http://www.msnbc.com/tools/newsalert/NewsAlertD.asp>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
PhotoOp - 1.0	1/5/97	1932k	Shareware \$29.95

PhotoOp is a Windows 95 program that allows you to construct a screen saver from your own photographs or image files (JPEG/GIF/BMP). A collage of overlapping images is scrolled across your screen in different directions at varying rates, presenting a constantly changing view of your pictures. Also provides for the playback of midi and wave file play lists. A "playing" keyboard may be displayed. Very fast screen painting. Easy, real time configuration and control. Program+5 photo images (Yosemite)+4 rotating globes. Self-extracting installation (InstallShield).

Download Site - <http://members.aol.com/JmPhotoOp/index.html>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
SimGolf for Win95	1/8/97	19.2mb	Commercial Demo

Introducing the game that turns blueprints into greens: SimGolf, with the comprehensive Course Architect. Choose from over 100 course elements, including bunkers, lakes and trees, to create-and play-your one-of-a-kind courses. Get design tips from legendary course architect Robert Trent Jones, Jr., and tee off on two Jones masterpieces, Rancho La Quinta and The Prince Course. You can even round up a virtual foursome to play your custom courses on the Internet.

Note: Win95 only. Also requires DirectX.

Download Site -
<http://www.maxis.com/shopping/product.cgi?ProductName=simgolf>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
Adr_Book 32-bit - 4.1	1/5/97	370k	Shareware

Adr_Book for Microsoft Windows is an intuitive and graphically pleasing address book database program and dialer. Although easy to use the program is full featured, with printing of labels, envelopes, booklets, and reports. You can select screen display for a visual look. Some of it's features include: Auto Phone Dialing, Query capabilities for selecting subsets of your database, and Prints multiple label styles, zip code ordering, starting label position

Download Site - <http://www.alaska.net/~mikeg/>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
RemoveR - 1.66	1/9/97	1800k	Shareware

By using this program you can see exactly what has been added to your drive - anywhere - since the last scan and is perfect to keep your system free from redundant DLLs and other junk that is often left behind by program "uninstallers". The program also offers the facility to save log files of what has changed on your system to allow you to uninstall programs at a later time.

Download Site: <http://homepages.enterprise.net/dodgy/>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
MacAccess - 2.0	1/8/97	1162k	Commercial Demo

MacAccess 2.0 is a software utility that allows your PC to read, write, and format Macintosh floppy disks, removable hard disks, and other Macintosh media. It also includes a host of other features such as a resource inspector, as well as some file translation abilities. The demo version works in Windows 95 and allows only 16k or smaller file transfers.

Download Site -<http://www.synchronys.com/>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
PhoneBook95 - 1.1	1/9/97	985k	Shareware

Powerful yet easy to use 32-bit Windows95 Phone/Address Book Management Application. Includes search and dialing capability. Installation wizard for easy installation.

Download Site -<http://members.aol.com/flowenol/index.html>

Name/Version	Release Date	Size	Price
PolyView - 2.80 beta	12/30/96	1300k	Shareware \$20.00

Update - PolyView by Polybytes is a shareware graphics viewer, conversion, and printing utility that has been optimized for use with Windows 95 and Windows NT (Intel). PolyView's noteworthy features are:

Download Site - <http://www.kagi.com/authors/polybytes/default.html>

A T T E N T I O N-A T T E N T I O N-A T T E N T I O N

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A T T E N T I O N-A T T E N T I O N-A T T E N T I O N

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U.S. ASKED TO HOLD OFF ON NEW ENCRYPTION RULES

Lawyers for Illinois computer science professor Dan Bernstein have asked the U.S. government to delay enforcing new export restrictions on encryption software until a court can judge their constitutionality. If the government ignores Bernstein's request, the attorneys will seek a court order barring the new rules' enforcement. "The new encryption rules are a pointless shell game," says the founder of the Electronic Frontier Foundation, which is backing Bernstein's suit. The new rules allow companies to export software with encryption codes of 56 bits or longer, provided they agree to give the government computer "keys" to allow law enforcement officials to decode protected transmissions. (Investor's Business Daily 2 Jan 97 A33)

EN TECHNOLOGY DISHES UP DATA AT CYBERCAFE

New Hampshire-based En Technology has received FCC clearance to embed data in video airing on more than 100 PBS stations featuring The Internet Caf=E9 show. A trial of the process has been operational at six PBS stations since October. The data transferred during the show is ported directly to PCs equipped with an external antenna or special cable hookup, and involves software related to a topic in this show. PC users who wish to receive En's transmissions must install a \$150 TV modem card in their computers. "We don't bring TV to the PC," says En's technology director. "We get much better throughput by blasting data through the video."

MASTERCARD, IBM TEAM UP FOR SECURE TRANSACTIONS ON THE NET

MasterCard International and IBM have teamed up with a Danish bank to demonstrate a system designed to protect credit card purchases on the Internet, using the Secure Electronic Transaction industry standard developed by Visa and MasterCard last February. A pilot program involving three merchants, 500 to 1,000 customers and the Danish Payment Systems bank is slated for the middle of this month. MasterCard anticipates that member banks will initiate some 50 pilot programs in 20 countries during the next three months, and the system should be available in 40 to 50 countries by the end of 1997. Visa International says its version of the credit card system has been delayed, and won't be widely available until early 1998. (Investor's Business Daily 2 Jan 97 A33)

PROGRESS NOTES ON APPLE'S RECOVERY

Apple says its revenue for the three-month period that ended Dec. 27th will be 10% lower than the previous quarter, resulting in an operating loss of up to \$150 million, due mainly to weak demand for its Performa consumer line of products. Chief executive Gil Amelio says the company, which he has already lead through a major reorganization, may now have to take additional restructuring steps. Amelio's plans call for Apple to return to profitability in the second quarter of this year. (AP 3 Jan 97)

PACKARD BELL PC AIMS FOR THE MASSES

Packard Bell is now offering a Pentium-based personal computer, with color monitor, for \$999. "Our vision is to make a personal computer affordable for every home," said Packard Bell chief executive Beny Alagem. (San Jose Mercury News Center 4 Jan 97)

CREATING A REAL WEB PAGE-TURNER

Houston-based ForeFront Group is marketing software that makes it possible to create and print double-sided booklets from Web page information. WebPrinter works with a laser or inkjet printer, using a PC running Windows 3.1 or Windows 95. (Investor's Business Daily 2 Jan 97 A8)
See=20 < <http://www.ffg.com> > for free version of the software.

PAROLEE SURFING CURTAILED

Without holding public hearings, the United States Parole Commission has approved new restrictions on the use of cyberspace by federal parolees. Under the restrictions, a parolee might be prohibited from owning a computer or be required to install monitoring equipment so that their surfing could be tracked. A commissioner said the concern is about offenders who have "histories involving either pedophilia or hate crime activity, the illegal use of explosives, those kinds of things... We monitored the Internet to see just what type of information was out there. In some of the newsgroups where you can find photographs of sexual conduct involving children, there's also quite a bit of text. I recall seeing things like individuals seeking advice in how to approach a child and get them to pose for pictures." (New York Times 5 Jan 96)

"WE'VE BEEN BEAMED TO MSN, SCOTTIE!"

Viacom, which owns the copyright to "Star Trek" products, is ordering Web

sites to remove any Star Trek artistic renderings, sound files, video clips, and book excerpts they are now presenting. There is an official Stark Trek site available on the Microsoft Network, available only to MSN subscribers. (Atlanta Journal-Constitution 3 Jan 97 F3)

BEST 50 NEWS SITES

Our little Edupage came in 19th in voting by 32,803 individuals who cast ballots in an American Journalism Review contest for the year's Best 50 NewsSites. The top 50 vote-getters, in order, are: CNN Interactive, Washington Post, USA Today, New York Times, Nando Times, Wall Street Journal, Los Angeles Times, San Jose Mercury News, Jerusalem Post, Washington Times, ESPN Net Sports Zone, Reuters News Media & My Yahoo, The Times of London, Detroit News, The Telegraph of London, Canadian Online Explorer, Tidbits, Sacramento Bee, Edupage, Honolulu Star Bulletin, Christian Science Monitor, Russia Today, Las Vegas Sun, Toronto Star, MacInTouch, CiOnline, Tampa Tribune, MSNBC, Detroit Free Press, Pathfinder, News Current, Ft. Worth Star-Telegram, Kansas City Star, ZDNet, Environment News Network, MacWorld, Fox News, Chicago Tribune, New Jersey Online, Star Tribune of Twin Cities, Financial Times, Philadelphia Online, News.Com, PointCast, PoliticsNow, HotWired, Irish Times, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, ClariNet e.news, and Tamnet. (American Journalism Review)=20
< <http://www.newslink.org/bestresults.html> >

NCAR CONSIDERS ITS SUPERCOMPUTER OPTIONS

The National Center for Atmosphere Research (NCAR), criticized by U.S. supercomputer-maker Cray Research for choosing to buy a supercomputer from the Japanese company NEC at a price allegedly \$65 million below market value, is considering buying a Hewlett-Packard Convex Exemplar "massively parallel" system that could be expanded until it has the processing capability to achieve a trillion operations a second. Purchase of the HP massively parallel computer would give NCAR a back-up option (other than a Cray vector machine) if the U.S. International Trade Commission decides that Cray's "anti-dumping" charges against NEC are correct. (New York Times 7 Jan 97 C1)

APPLE'S CORE WAXES RHAPSODIC

Apple Computer says that for the next few years it will pursue a "dual operating system" strategy, offering machines that run both its existing Macintosh System 7 operating system and its new Next-based system, code-named Rhapsody. Chief Technology Officer Ellen Hancock promised existing Mac users that support for System 7 will continue for the next several years. (Wall Street Journal 7 Jan 97 B6) The new line of machines is necessary because the Next-based system won't run on any of the existing Macs, including those using the popular Motorola 680x0 line of chips. It will, however, run on Intel-based computers now using Windows 95 and Windows NT. (Tampa Tribune 7 Jan 97 B&F8)

INTERNET IS NO.1 CHOICE FOR FOREIGN SNOOPERS

A report released by the National Counterintelligence Center (NACIC) indicates that the Internet is the fastest growing method used by foreign entities to gather intelligence about U.S. companies. "All requests for information received via the Internet should be viewed with suspicion," says the report, which urges caution in replying to requests coming from foreign countries or foreign governments, particularly with regard to questions about defense-related technology. NACIC works in close coordination with the CIA, but is an autonomous agency reporting the

National Security Council. (BNA Daily Report for Executives 6 Jan 97)

DOD URGES "INFORMATION CZAR" APPOINTMENT

The U.S. Department of Defense has recommended establishing a new "information-warfare" czar in the Defense Department and an "information-warfare" center within U.S. intelligence agencies. A report released by a task force appointed by the Defense Science Board calls for spending \$580 million in R&D over the coming years, mainly in the private sector, to develop new software and hardware to provide security, such as a system for automatically tracing cracker attacks back to their source. The task force also recommends changing the laws so that the Pentagon can legally pursue and repel those who attempt to hack into DoD computer systems, injecting their computers with "a polymorphic virus that wipes out the system, takes it down for weeks." A Defense Department spokesman notes that the Advanced Research Projects Agency is working on an "electronic immune system" that could detect invaders and mobilize against them. (Wall Street Journal 6 Jan 97 B2)

WESTERN GOVERNORS U. PUTS DOWN ROOTS

The new Western Governors University has decided to establish its corporate offices in Salt Lake City, and its academic operations in Denver - the capitals of the states represented by its most visible backers, Gov. Mike Leavitt of Utah and Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado. The university's legal counsel says he expects WGU to complete incorporation early this year, and plans to seek approval from all three of the regional accrediting bodies with jurisdiction in the participating states. Officials hope to begin offering classes next fall. (Chronicle of Higher Education 10 Jan 97 A27)

PC SALES GROWTH WINDS DOWN

After exceptionally strong performance the last couple of years, the growth rate of home PC sales slowed to about 13% in 1996, and might dwindle to only 6% in '97, according to Dataquest estimates. And while corporate sales were a robust 19% in '96, they're projected to slow down, too, to about 14% this year. "To date, the corporate market is ahead of (projections) while the consumer market is behind," says a Dataquest analyst. Dataquest estimates that worldwide PC sales will grow 17.7% in '97, down from 19% in '96, driven primarily by sales in Latin America and Asia. Meanwhile, Forrester Research predicts that the percentage of homes with PCs will push past 50% by 2001, spurred by lower priced and easier-to-use machines. "(There's) nothing that's going to blow the lid off and bring in 60% penetration," says an analyst for International Data Corp. "I think the market will continue to be an upgrade and replacement market." (Investor's Business Daily 7 Jan 97 A8)

MICROSOFT'S SPENDING SPREE

Microsoft invested in or purchased outright 20 companies in 1996, spending somewhere around \$750 million, according to company executives. The volume of the transactions has pushed Microsoft into the top tier of all corporate investors: "I see no other company in this industry that is moving as aggressively and with as single a purpose," says Broadview Associates' chairman. Most of the company's acquisitions contribute to Microsoft's strategy to be tops in Internet-related activities. (Business Week 13 Jan 97 p34)

TEACHING VIA COMPUTER

McMaster University sociology professor Dr. Carl Cuneo is the head of a new \$4.5-million research project called the Network for the Evaluation of Education and Training Technologies that aims to find out what works and what doesn't in computer courseware. Researchers from the academic community and industry will look at everything from teachers who resist technology in the classroom to the effect that the electronic delivery of courses has on addictive behaviors. (Toronto Globe & Mail 7 Jan 97 A1&A8)

WINDOWS IN CHINA

Microsoft has launched the Chinese version of its Windows NT Server 4.0 and Workstation 4.0 operating systems for corporate users. The Chinese computer market is expected to grow by more than 50% this year, and as many as 3 million personal computers could be sold this year in China. Microsoft is hoping that a domestic software industry will help eliminate software piracy in that country. (Washington Post 7 Jan 97)

U.S. TARGETS CANADIAN INTERNET BOOKMAKING

Minnesota law enforcement officials have targeted an Internet-based bookmaking operation being run from a Native reserve in New Brunswick. Representatives of the Tobique Band say they are not violating any laws because the toll-free number is not accessible by Canadians and Americans must call a foreign country to place bets on sporting events because telephone wagering is also illegal there. Minnesota investigators point to a recent victory over a band in Idaho that thought it was immune from laws in other states. (Toronto Globe & Mail 6 Jan 97 A8)

MICROSOFT TO BEEF UP MAC SOFTWARE PRODUCTION

Microsoft has announced its plans to set up a 100-person unit to write applications software for Apple Macintosh computers. In exchange, Apple has agreed to package Microsoft's Explorer browser software in addition to Netscape Navigator with its machines. Some observers suggest Microsoft's move is motivated at least in part by its desire to avoid more antitrust scrutiny, but company officials deny the latest effort has anything to do with its Justice Dept. worries. (Wall Street Journal 8 Jan 97 B8)
Clarification to Edupage, 7 Jan 97: Apple's new Next-based operating system *will* work with the Macintosh machines currently being sold -- it will not, however, be compatible with Macs based on the Motorola 680x0 line of chips used up until 1994.

IBM OFFERS FREE PATENT DATA BASE ON WEB

IBM plans to make the content of 2 million U.S. patents (from 1971) available free on the Web site < <http://www.ibm.com/patents/> >. Various companies provide patent access for a fee; one company, Questel-Orbit (a division of France Telecom) charges \$1,995 a year, and a company executive says: "I still believe that we have the most robust search engine." (New York Times 9 Jan 97 C3)

MOVING TOWARD THE BIG CHIP

Despite a 10% decline in chip revenue in 1996, companies still plan on converting from the current 8-inch to 12-inch silicon wafers, beginning in 1998. "It's too important for them to put off," says the director of the Semiconductor Equipment and Materials Institute's 300-millimeter (12-inch) conversion committee. "It could be the biggest retooling of an industry in history," with costs estimated at \$14 billion. The larger wafers will be capable of holding 2.4 times more chips, boosting productivity. As many

as 11 chipmakers will begin low-volume and test production next year, and by 2000, about five factories are expected to begin high-volume production. (Wall Street Journal 8 Jan 97 B8)

KEEPING AN EYE ON THINGS VIA THE NET

Irvine, Calif.-based Wonderware Corp. has developed a new product that allows remote monitoring of work locations via the Internet or company intranet. Wonderware Scout enables manufacturing plant supervisors to view process graphics and industrial automation data from any location, and provides for linking sites together, so that a supervisor can oversee multiple locations. (Investor's Business Daily 8 Jan 97 A6) <
<http://scout.wonderware.com/> >

3M SUES MICROSOFT OVER POST-IT NOTES

Minnesota Mining & Manufacturing (3M) has filed a lawsuit against Microsoft, alleging that the electronic post-it notes feature in Microsoft's Office 97 software suite infringes on 3M's patent for its software version of the ubiquitous little squares of paper that can be stuck on anything. Office 97 users access the post-it feature by entering "Post-it" or "3M Post-it." 3M says it hasn't approved the Microsoft product and isn't connected in any way with it. (Wall Street Journal 9 Jan 97 B2)

WEB SPOOFING IS NO JOKE

Researchers at Princeton University have released a paper documenting ways that nefarious crackers could dupe unwitting Web browsers into divulging personal information, such as bank personal identification numbers or credit card numbers. One way to do this is to break into a legitimate Web server and alter the links to other sites, so that when users click to transfer, they're actually transported to the cracker's computer where the virtual hijacker can watch every move they make (such as entering credit card info when prompted). The researchers suggest that Web surfers take the following precautions: disabling JavaScript in their Web browsing software; keeping an eye on the software's location line, to ensure they know where they are; and paying close attention to the addresses they visit. (Chronicle of Higher Education 10 Jan 97 A25) <
<http://www.cs.princeton.edu/sip/pub/spoofing.html> >

AOL BLOCKS RUSSIAN ACCESS

America Online has shut down service in 40 cities in the former Soviet Union, primarily in Russia, because of widespread incidents where fraudulent credit-card numbers were used to access the service. Last month, the company set up an Integrity Assurance division to fight online fraud, and the company routinely denies access to those who log on using fraudulent means. AOL is not sure when service to Russia will resume: "Until we feel comfortable that we have an understanding of the problem, we're not prepared to put it back up," says Integrity Assurance's VP. (Wall Street Journal 8 Jan 97 B6)

INTEL DISPUTES CHIPMAKERS' PLANS TO USE MMX NAME

With the introduction of its MMX multimedia chips, Intel has announced its intention to trademark the MMX name, preventing chipmakers Cyrix Corp. and Advanced Micro Devices Inc. from issuing chips with the same name. "We don't believe MMX is a valid trademark," says an AMD spokesman. "We think it is a generic term, and we plan to use the term in our marketing. We're

trying to solve this amicably with Intel." Intel will be using MMX in a redesigned logo in a multi-million dollar ad campaign, and says although AMD licensed the chip technology from Intel, it didn't receive the rights to use the name. (Wall Street Journal 9 Jan 97 B5)

NOW *THIS* IS VIDEO-ON-DEMAND

A Dutch company thinks it's cracked the video-on-demand nut with a new approach called electronic digital delivery (EDD). EMC International Holding B.V. is marketing a technology that allows consumers to download a video to their VCRs using a compression process that takes about 10 minutes. Movies can be ordered via a toll-free number, an on-screen display or the Internet. Consumers can buy or rent the films, but if the film is rented it can be viewed only twice before special embedded technology renders the movie unusable. The service will be available in about a year, but will work only with VCRs with built-in EDD capabilities. EMC says that capability will add only about \$50 to the cost of a VCR. (Investor's Business Daily 9 Jan 97 A6)

INCREDIBLE SHRINKING DIGITAL DISKS

Hollywood studios have begun releasing some videos in a high-resolution DVD (Digital Video Disk) format that offers much sharper picture-quality and packages seven times as much data as existing CDs. DVD player units will be available this spring, at prices starting at about \$500. Later generations of DVDs will allow users to record movies and computer data, but the first generation will be read-only; computer-makers will also be using the disks (which are sometime called Digital Versatile Disks), and Intel executives have said all major computer manufacturers would introduce high-end DVD-based systems by the end of the year, and that DVD-based systems for the general market will be available in 1998, on machines using Intel's P6 processor and MMX multimedia technology. (New York Times 9 Jan 97 C2)

ZENITH JOINS NC BANDWAGON

Zenith Electronics is developing a network computer (NC) called Net Vision, to be introduced later this year for \$500 or less; the system will connect to a TV set and phone line to deliver World Wide Web pages, handle e-mail, and run Java application programs or "applets" from the Net at 33.6 kilobits per second. (San Jose Mercury News Center 9 Jan 97)

PLOT UNRAVELS FOR WEB SOAP OPERA

Unless new investors come to the rescue, it will soon be curtains for the Web soap opera called "The Spot," which offered surfers an invitation to "Immerse yourself in the sun, sand, and secret journals of five twenty somethings living under one roof." Media analyst Gary Arlen says the show's cancellation would be a signal that investors are becoming increasingly dissatisfied with opportunities for making money from the Web. (Atlanta Journal-Constitution 9 Jan 97 C7)

BUT PLOT THICKENS FOR INTERNET COMMERCE

IBM says it expects its Internet-related businesses to break even this year and that they are "turning the corner." IBM's Net.Commerce software allows merchants to handle electronic transactions, and its World Avenue is an e-mail service. A company executive estimates that \$900 million of business was done on the Net in 1996 and predicts that \$3- to 4-billion will be done this year and \$1 trillion in 2000. (New York Times 9 Jan 97)

C3)

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Apple/Mac Section
John Deegan, Editor

Microsoft Announces New Technologies to Make Personal Computers More Interactive

Initial Limited Release SDK to Be Delivered in February To More Than 50 Companies From the PC, Consumer Electronics and Television Industries
REDMOND, Wash. - Jan. 9, 1997 - Microsoft Corp. today announced the early delivery of new technologies to make personal computers more interactive by integrating them with television. Building on the Simply Interactive PC (SIPC) initiatives announced in April 1996, these technologies consist of broadcast components that allow PCs to receive television programming, data services and new forms of entertainment blending the two, plus user interface elements appropriate for use on large-screen display devices, such as a large VGA monitor or television.

"Both the PC and the consumer electronics industries are predicting the evolution of home computers into home entertainment appliances," said Jim Allchin, senior vice president, personal and business systems group at Microsoft. "These technologies will help our business partners to deliver on that vision by providing a common open platform for content creators, data services and network integration."

These technologies will create new ways to experience television, such as the following:

- By combining the PC, television and the Internet, content companies can create compelling interactive television programming.
- By using broadcast technology to push multimedia-rich Internet content

to consumers, broadcast networks can deliver and store data locally on the

PC, reducing the Internet bandwidth bottleneck while improving the consumer's overall experience.

- By delivering new business models, such as subscription services for software, electronic periodicals, and news and entertainment delivery through a set of secure, billable and scalable data services.

Microsoft also announced the introduction of new user interface elements for the Windows operating system. These interfaces are designed for use with remote control devices and for controlling audio, video and other consumer electronics devices. Optimized for distance viewing and display on large-screen devices such as a VGA monitor or television, these components will improve the interactivity of the PC and appeal both to customers who use computers and to those who may never have used them before.

The convergence of consumer electronics and personal computing offers new revenue opportunities for participants and the chance to collaborate with companies from different industries to produce new products and services. Companies that have said they intend to develop technologies and services using these Microsoft components span every industry involved in technology convergence. They include Adaptec Inc.; AST; ATI Technologies Inc.; Big Ticket Television (Spelling Entertainment); Brooktree Division of Rockwell Semiconductor Systems; Cirrus Logic Inc.; Compaq Computer Corp.; Comspan Communications; ComStream Corp.; CyberSource Corp.; DIRECTV; DIRECTV Japan; Fujitsu Ltd.; Galaxy Latin America; Gateway 2000; Glen Larson Entertainment Network; Gould Resources & Internet Telecommunications (GRIT); Guthy Renker; Hitachi Home Electronics (America) Inc.; Hitachi Ltd.; Hughes Network Systems Inc.; IBM Corp.; Matsushita Electric Industrial Company Ltd.; Micron Electronics; Ministry of Film; Mitsubishi Electric Corp.; MSNT, The Microsoft Network; NBC; NEC; News Digital Systems; Norpak Corp.; North Hall Productions; PerfectTV Corp.; Recovery Network; RYSHER Entertainment; Samsung Information Systems America; Sanyo Electric Co. Ltd.; Sci-Fi Channel; SGS-Thomson Microelectronics Inc.; Sharp Corp.; Sony Electronics Inc.; StarSight Telecast Inc.; Telesaurus Rex; Toshiba U.S.A.; Toshiba Corp.; Tseng Labs Inc.; TV Food Network; USA Network; VLSI Technology Inc.; WavePhore Inc.; and The Zalman King Co.

Availability

Microsoft intends to deliver initial development kits to key companies this February. For further information on these broadcast technologies and the development kits, please visit the Web site at <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/broadsvs.htm/>. (this site will go live this week) Products and services that support these technologies are expected to be available to the public by the end of 1997.

Microsoft Announces New Macintosh Product Unit Company Reaffirms Commitment to Macintosh Platform

Microsoft Announces Enhanced Microsoft Office for Macintosh
New Tools Designed to Help Small Businesses

MacUser Editors Name Microsoft Internet Explorer for Macintosh as WINNER of Industry's Most Significant Honor.

MacUser, the leading monthly magazine for buyers of Macintosh computers and products, has selected Microsoft's Internet Explorer as the 1996 Editors'

Choice Award Winner for Best Internet Access Application. The Eddy Award recognizes the best Macintosh hardware and software products released throughout the year. Winner products were selected based on their technological innovation, quality, performance, user friendliness, and value to Macintosh users.

During a year of headline-grabbing news about the Internet, the Macintosh met the challenge with a slew of new Web publishing products while continuing to lead the way in graphics, imaging, and DTP, noted MacUser editor-in-chief Pamela Pfiffner. On the hardware side, the Macintosh excels in innovation. That's why many familiar names moved their products to the Macintosh platform, proving what insiders have known all along--that the Mac platform is strong and growing.

On January 6th, 1997, MacUser named the winners of the 1996 Editors' Choice Awards at a live ceremony in San Francisco. For the first time in the history of the Eddys, the exclusive awards ceremony were viewed live on the Web. Online viewers can access the archived Webcast of the ceremony from MacUser's Eddy Awards Web site at www.eddyawards.com.

The 1996 Eddy Awards ceremony announced winners in 36 product categories. Special awards honored the Hardware and Software Products of the Year as well as recognized the Breakthrough Technology of the Year. In addition, two personal achievement awards were presented to individuals who have made significant contributions to the Macintosh industry.

Kids Computing Corner
Frank Sereno, Editor

Matrox Millennium STR Focus Lookin' it Over!

High-performance professional graphics accelerator

- '• 64-bit PCI graphics board
- '• Powerful dual-ported WRAM memory
- '• Blazing fast Windows acceleration
- '• Ultra-high resolution and color displays
- '• Smooth video playback
- '• Professional 3D rendering
- '• 2 or 4 MB base board, upgradable to 4 or 8 MB
- '• Upgradable with full range of video add-ons

Advanced Graphics Technology With over 20 years of technical excellence behind Matrox, the Millennium delivers unprecedented levels of performance to your desktop PC. Whether you're a corporate power user looking to accelerate your business applications and corporate training videos, or a 2D/3D designer looking for high resolution true color support, Matrox Millennium offers the most powerful solution for all your professional needs.

Featuring Matrox's award-winning MGA 64-bit graphics processor, superior dual-ported Window RAM memory, and a powerful 220 MHz RAMDAC, Matrox Millennium maintains high system performance as you increase to maximum

resolutions, color depths and refresh rates. Matrox Millennium is upgradable to 8 MB of Window RAM, enabling you to work in true 24-bit color at 1600 x 1200 resolution. And with the Media Series of video upgrades, you'll gain high quality, professional desktop video enhancements.

And now Matrox raises the performance bar once again by further optimizing its feature rich drivers for Windows 95 and Windows NT. You'll now get over 40 Million Winmarks of raw graphics speed and increased productivity with Matrox's new Desk Navigator. This powerful "bird's eye view" lets you scroll around a virtual desktop of 2048 x 1536. Also included is a professional color calibration utility from Sonnetech and over 20 enhancements for your Windows 95 and Windows NT desktop.

- '• Award winning MGA-2064W 64-bit graphics chip
- '• Powerful dual-ported Window RAM memory
- '• Blazing fast Windows acceleration
- '• Optimized drivers for Windows NT, Win 95 and Win 3.11
- '• Over 20 productivity features
- '• 2 or 4 MB base board, upgradeable to 4 or 8 MB

Winbench 96 at 1024 x 768 @ 24-bit

Matrox Millennium's superior technology was designed to accelerate graphically demanding applications under Windows and DOS. Its MGA-2064W graphics processor integrates acceleration for true color, digital video, and 2D/3D rendering into a single chip design. And now, with newly optimized Windows drivers, Matrox Millennium is faster than ever.

Unlike many graphics accelerators which use less performance memory types such as DRAM, Matrox Millennium uses faster, dual-ported Window RAM memory. This new memory type processes information to the graphics chip and screen simultaneously thus reducing the time needed to redraw the screen.

By combining these powerful features under one chip and board level technology, you'll get all the speed you need and more for your high resolution documents, corporate training videos, desktop publishing, and CAD designs.

- '• Resolutions up to 1600x1200 in 256, 65K and 16.7 million colors
- '• Virtual desktop sizes of up to 2048 x 1536
- '• 220 MHz DAC for resolutions up to 1600 x 1200 at 85Hz
- '• Multiple monitor support under Windows NT
- '• New color calibration utility from Sonnetech with Kodak's Precision Color Management System New support and optimization for over 175 monito

rs

Matrox Millennium enhances the readability and image quality of your documents. By supporting resolutions up to 1600 x 1200 non-interlaced, you'll get added screen real estate for displaying multiple applications at once on your screen. This means you'll no longer have to tediously scroll through your desktop to view your documents.

To eliminate headaches and eyestrain, Matrox Millennium uses a 220 MHz RAMDAC for reducing the annoying flicker commonly found with most monitors. Also available is the special PowerDoc Edition which comes with a powerful 250 MHz RAMDAC for 1800 x 1440 resolutions support at 70 Hz flicker-free refresh and 1600 x 1200 at 88 Hz.

For improved image quality of color documents, Matrox Millennium accelerates 256, 65K and 16.7M color at resolutions up to 1600 x 1200. Matrox Millennium's superior image load speed ensures high system performance in all color depths and resolutions making it the ideal graphics accelerator for desktop publishing, photo retouching, and illustration packages.

- '• Plays back MPEG and AVI video clips in full screen, full motion
Hardware accelerated color space conversion and video upscaling
- '• Full support for Microsoft's DCI, Direct Draw and Direct Video
- '• Bundled with Compcore's Softpeg MPEG player for Windows
- '• Frame capture, hardware MPEG and T.V. tuner upgrades available

Matrox Millennium provides full screen, full motion video playback capabilities with exceptional image quality. Through Microsoft's DCI or Direct Draw drivers, Matrox Millennium accelerates color space conversion and video upscaling directly in hardware, so you'll be able to run full-screen video clips at up to 30 frames per second without dropping frames. Ideal for computer based training applications, video over the network, education software, video kiosks and multimedia titles. It also comes with Compcore's software MPEG player that enables you to decode MPEG titles under Windows.

By combining Matrox Millennium with the Matrox Media series of video upgrades (sold separately), you'll also be able to decode MPEG titles in hardware for superior image quality and system performance with the Media XL MPEG module. Watch T.V. right on your PC with the Media TV module! (Note: Media XL MPEG cannot be used in combination with the memory upgrades.)

- '• Hardware accelerated 3D Gouraud shading, double buffering and Z-buffering
- '• Supports real-time Gouraud shading at up to 1280 x 1024 in 16-bit color
- '• Full-featured display drivers for AutoCADT, MicrostationT 5.0 for DOS
- '• Support for standard 3D APIs including OpnGLr, Microsoft's Direct3D and Criterion RenderWareTM Bundled 3D F/X from Asymetrix for adding 3D effects to business presentations
- '• Includes Netscape Navigator 2.0 with 3D Web browser plug in

Matrox Millennium's powerful 3D rendering provides a high performance solution for accelerating 2D and 3D CAD applications for your desktop PC. You can instantaneously render 3D wireframe objects to Gouraud shading and then rotate them in real-time. And with 8 MB of Window RAM memory, you can work in 3D resolutions up to 1600 x 1200 in 8-bit color, or 1280 x 1024 in 16-bit double buffered modes.

Matrox Millennium also comes with DynaView 2D/3D . This powerful display list driver for AutoCad under Windows and DOS, and dual-display driver for Microstation comes with an entire host of features which will make your CAD desktop more dynamic. Features include real-time Spy Glass and Bird's Eye Views, dynamic Scroll and Zoom Bars, resizable and positional Main Windows, and programmable, pop-up Iconic Menus and Toolbars.

Matrox's industry renowned MGA drivers have been expertly engineered for Microsoft WindowsT 95, WindowsT 3.11, WindowsT NT and OS/2T Warp. Each MGA

driver has gone through extensive testing in Matrox's internal quality assurance facilities and is the reason why it has been adopted by leading computer manufacturers as Compaq, Digital, Gateway 2000, IBM, Hewlett Packard, and NEC. MGA drivers offer reliable performance and problem-free support.

MGA Software Drivers

WindowsT 3.1
WindowsT 3.11
WindowsT '95
Windows NTT 3.5, 4.0
OS/2T 2.1; WarpT 3.0
AutoCADT release 12, 13 for DOS and Windows
MicrostationT 5.0

VESA 2.0 (Up to 1280 x 1024 resolution) Warranty and Technical Support

- 3 year warranty
- Technical Support Line, FTP and WWW sites, CompuServe, 24-hr BBS, DDC-2B Compliant

New Virtual Desktop - sizes from 640 x 480 to 2048 x 1536 (Win 95)

- New Desk Navigator utility for bird's eye view (Win 95)
- New Monitor Selection - support and optimization for over 175 monitors (Win 95 & NT)
- Instant ModeSWITCHT - for on-the-fly resolution and color depth switching (Win 3.11)
- PixelTouchT - hardware accelerated pan and zoom (Win 95, NT & 3.11)
- QCDDP - true color simulation in 8 and 16 - bit modes (Win 3.11)
- PanLock - locks virtual desktop working area in place (Win 95 & 3.11)
- Windows installation - easy installation (Win 95 & 3.11)
- Enhanced plug and play capabilities
- Center Pop-Up and Center Window automatic centering of pop-up menus and windows (Win 95, NT & 3.11)
- MaxVIEW - maximizes the window within the boundaries of the visible desktop area
- Quick Access - repositionable iconic menu for instant access of MGA's hot-key features, (Win NT & 3.11) And more!

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- No underlining!
- Columns shall be achieved through the use of tabs only. Or, columns in Word format. Do NOT use the space bar.
- No ASCII "ART"!!

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- Artwork (pictures, graphs, charts, etc.) should be sent along with the article separately
- Please use a single font only in an article. TTF CG Times 12pt. is preferred. (VERY Strong Hint)

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Ralph F. Mariano, Editor
STReport International Online Magazine

Gaming Hotwire STR Feature - The World of Contemporary Gaming

REVIEW:

FINAL DOOM

Publisher: WilliamsDeveloper: idGenre: ShooterWhen you start up a copy of Doom, you pretty much know what to expect. You are going to run around mazes blasting creatures from Hell with a variety of weapons. Regardless of which system you own or which sequel you're playing, Doom is a first-person game that pits you against the entire populace of Hades armed with only your wits and a super shotgun (and maybe the BFG9000, oh yes!). Therefore, it's the details that really determine the relative worth of each Doom release. Does it look good? Does it handle well? Are the levels intelligently designed? Do you occasionally jump out of your seat after rounding a corner and ending up toe-to-claw with a Baron of Hell?

Final Doom looks pretty good on the PlayStation. Not great like on the PC, but not horrible like that 32X release a few years back. One of the biggest problems is the amount of red in the game -- red walls, red lava, and plenty of red blood. Red tends to bleed on a TV screen, and it not only looks bad, it hurts your eyes after a while. The PlayStation controller was made for Doom; it has never been easier to run, strafe and blow demons up at the same time. The PlayStation's shoulder buttons allow you to strafe and change weapons conveniently, without having to become a touch typist like on the PC.

The levels are top notch, and there are plenty of them -- Final Doom is

actually three games in one. First are the "Master Levels," a collection of levels pulled from the Internet and given the official thumbs up from id. The next two, "The Plutonia Experiment" and "TNT: Evilution," are id originals, totalling about 40 levels. If you can refrain from using the cheat codes, Final Doom has extremely high replay value -- once you defeat the game in the hardest mode, try beating each level starting only with a pistol.

As for the immersion factor, nothing beats Doom. Playing this game at two in the morning with all the lights out is where it's at -- your heart is pounding, your palms are sweaty, and you are primed for surprises. There were times when I was so startled that I inadvertently pulled the controller out of the PlayStation. Final Doom is a blast on the PlayStation, even if nothing is really new. After all, where would the fun be if our hero tried to connect spiritually with the Hellspawn and maybe share his feeling over a cup of tea? To change the gameplay, the enemy, or the setting is to mess with a formula that has served id, and us, so well.

Score: 8/10

Tunnel B1

Review By Larry Tipton

Tunnel B1 is a game published by Acclaim Entertainment. Here we go again. Yet another villain builds a weapon with such destructive power that it will absolutely annihilate the planet and, of course, its' inhabitants (you and me) Sounds like fun times are ahead of us folks.

From the game manual...

In a future world, much remains the same: the need to protect, the need to preserve. Upon twisted, groaning griders, in the sluice of a castoff generation, society has built weapons beyond its capacity to control.

Everything is base and we scabble for the scraps of redundant ideologies. The die has been cast and the sides have been set. As always, there are those who are determined to rule by force. It begins with one man - a dictator by any measure - and the creation of a weapon too awesome to contemplate, a weapon no sane being would consider using... Now, at last we react. Finally, perhaps too late, we see that this weapon has to be destroyed... or humanity will perish. ..end

What are you waiting for, we have work to do!

Tunnel B1 is a first person high speed corridor-style shooter with incredible light sourced texture mapped graphics with plenty seat of the pants action. You take the role of a hover craft pilot. You'll be taking on the doomsday device head-on. But first, you must survive the gauntlet of death known as "Tunnel B1." Enemy barricades, gun emplacements, mine fields, mobile enemy vehicles of destruction, nuclear devices and more await. It's not easy brother.

Game Mechanics...

The games control mechanism is quite impressive. Once you get used the various options you'll be zooming at breakneck speeds blowing up every baddie in sight! With the control pad you can do the following things:

- Weapon Lock/Unlock
- Rotate Left/Right

- Activate Boosters
- Brake/Go in Reverse
- Accelerate
- Straffe (yes!)
- Toggle Weapons
- Fire Primary Weapon
- Fire Secondary Weapon

Pressing Select reveals the MAP. Here you can:

- Review the mission objective(s)
- Zoom In/Out

Ah, but there's even more (defensive) control stuff to learn! You can slide by pressing the brake and accelerate buttons while rotating left or right. Pressing Straffe along with the above can also be helpful when doing battle with certain enemies. The speed boost is important too. Some levels have a time limit and every second counts!

Game Options...

There are a few. These include Save Configuration, Load Game, Controller and Sound Configuration, View High Scores and Difficulty. Actually, there is only one game difficulty. In this case game Difficulty is just the number of lives allowed (6 is the max).

Game Details...

Tunnel B1 is mission based. Complete the objectives, find the exit point and move on. After completing a mission you can save the game. There are no mid mission save locations. At the start of each mission you receive a mission brief. You must complete the Primary Objective. Secondary objectives are optional but are usually easier to take on.

Note: The manual hints that your progress will be easier in the later levels if you complete the secondary objectives.

It is important to take out the power generators. This will disable the security circuits. However, generators will "heal" itself and come back online. However, if you take 'em out with a Rocket, Missile, Bomb or Mine they stay down. Certain canisters contain important powerups. Blow 'em up to find 'em. However, don't get too close. Radiation is harmful to you and your craft. Setting off Alarms will result in alerting the enemy of your whereabouts. It is not recommended to set off alarms. Passing through Light Barriers or sensors will trigger an event such as opening a door or triggering an alarm somewhere with the level that you are currently enjoying.

Weapons...

You start with the 3 barrel machine gun. It has unlimited ammo. However, there are powerups throughout the game that will give you an incredible array of firepower to fight your way to your ultimate destiny. These include rockets, missiles and more. Some can be locked on to a target.

{WARNING! Here's a little cheat that you might find interesting if you are having trouble:

Press and hold L1, R1, L2, R2, S, O, X, Triangle at the same time. This code will fill your life meter and give you access to all of the weapons. Use only in extreme situations. <g> }

Display...

The cockpit is unencumbered and offers a huge view of the playing area. It is functional, yet it does not get in the way. The map is very doom-like. However, you cannot continue to move while in map mode.

Bottom Line...

In summary, Tunnel Bl is a fine 32-bit shooter - a welcome edition to any 3D shooter fan's library. Reminiscent of the Descent series in some ways, Tunnel Bl offers a lot of high performance challenge for the first person shooter fan. Unlike some shooters, this one is NOT on rails. You can turn and burn! The game is a sight to behold. I found myself scrunched down in my chair after playing it for a while. It has a very cool claustrophobic effect. This is a good thing as it adds intensity to the gameplay.

Recommended!

PREVIEW:

WILD ARMS

Publisher: Sony Developer: Media Vision IncGenre: RPGRelease Date: May 97

While the Western World waits with baited breath for Final Fantasy 7, Wild Arms, a new RPG from Japan, could be good enough to tide gamers over until Square's delayed game. Recently released in Japan, Wild Arms combines Suikoden-like sprite-based exploration with full polygonal 3D fighting sequences. Carrying on the rich RPG tradition of dense and complex story lines, Wild Arms brings together three strangers to battle against an ancient and powerful enemy. The game takes place on the mystical world of Fargaia, a planet where different species of sentient beings live in uneasy harmony. Long ago, humans coexisted with the strange ELW, a long-living race of elf-like peoples. The Guardians, also known as the "Powerful Existence," were a race of god-like beings who also lived on Fargaia. Then the Metal Demons came.

Fleeing from their collapsing homeworld, the Planet Hiades, the Metal Demons crossed time and space to claim Fargaia their own. Taking up arms to defend their planet, the inhabitants of Fargaia barely defeated the Demons, but at a huge cost. The Guardians, who developed powerful weapons to fight the Demons, such as the fantastic Arms, who could only be wielded by those with a natural, spiritual talent, and the Golems, who were built with the help of ELW magic, lost their powers in the war and now only exist in a helpless spiritual form. The ELW also fought bravely during the war, but were alienated by the humans in the aftermath, and fled Fargaia.

It is now 1000 years later, and Fargaia has never fully recovered from the war. Much of the planet is covered in ruins, the rest in desert. Much of the technology once possessed by the planet has been lost. The 8 Golems, feared for their destructive power, have been hidden by the humans, and the amazing Arms have all but disappeared. And now the Metal Demons return. Wild

Arms differs from most RPGs, in that you start the game with not one main character, but are required to bring three separate ones together. You play as each character individually, until all three meet. They then become

"as one," as is common with most RPGs. The primary figure is Rudy Roughnight, a powerful wandering mercenary, also known as a "Flying Bird." Jack Van Burace is a treasure hunter who trawls ancient ruins in search of lost Arms. He has a special companion named Hanpen, a spiritual speaking rat who can cross caverns and pick up items that Jack can not normally reach. Rounding out the trio is Cecilia Lynn Adelhyde, a princess of the ruined kingdom who employs magic. She has also been blessed with the ability to communicate with the now-hidden Guardians. In addition to the normal basic actions like running and throwing, the characters have been programmed to display a large degree of body language.

Wild Arms should please most RPG fans with its intricate storyline and exciting fighting sequences. The spells, while not as flashy as, say, Final Fantasy 7's Tsunami, make excellent use of the PlayStation's light sourcing capabilities and other special effects. This is definitely one to watch for.

Classics & Entertainment Section
Editor Dana P. Jacobson

From the Atari Editor's Desk

"Saying it like it is!"

There's little going on with regard to Atari news this week; however, I do have some interesting tidbits to share.

First of all, if you've been wary of playing around with the WWW STiK/CAB Web browser software, don't be. With a few tips from fellow Atarians online, I got it to work within a few days after spending an hour or so each night playing with it (sorry Joe!!). A few months ago I attempted to get this package to work with no input and became frustrated and deleted all of the files after about a week. But, after seeing messages from friends in the Atari Advantage area on Delphi who managed to get it up and running fairly quickly, I decided to try again. I'm glad that I did.

I haven't got all of the modules to work yet, but just getting STiK and CAB to work is a major victory for me! And, it works well, albeit slow with just a 14.4 baud modem. I visited a few web sites just to test (only one crash, my fault) and was pleasantly surprised at what I saw. Notedly, the graphics weren't as crisp as you might see using a PC with elaborate web browser software, but pleasing nonetheless! So, I'd suggest another go at it if you've put it aside. BTW, I'm using the software and connecting through Delphi as I don't have an account through an Internet Provider; I have Internet access via Delphi.

Now to work to get the various other modules to work...

As mentioned last week, Albert Dayes has recently joined our staff. We were hoping to hear from Albert in this week's issue, but an ongoing bout with the flu has prevented that from happening. We hope to see him in these pages shortly.

If you've been keeping up with national news (no, not computer news), you're likely aware of the weather/nature problems currently ongoing on the west coast. For many of us, the news of flooding, mudslides, fires, etc. is a tragic one but something we only read or see on the news; and it

really doesn't affect us personally. However, when you know personally know people who are being affected by these freak acts of nature, it takes on a whole new meaning.

For most of us reading these pages, you're probably aware of the name Don Thomas. You know him, the former Customer Service guru and all-around whiz guy at Atari who is now working for Sony. Well, Don happens to live in an area of California that is being threatened by flood waters. Part of the town that he lives in has been evacuated already, and his home could be lost if the situation worsens before it gets better. Fortunately, Don and his family are not in imminent danger as there's a major 4-lane highway and a short distance between him and the flood water. But, we all know that Mother Nature is not always predictable.

I've talked with Don a few times the past few days and I can say that he and his family are concerned enough that they've removed their really valuable things from their home and moved "less" valuable things to the attic just in case. I don't know how Don manages it, but it must be awfully stressful not knowing whether or not he'll have a home to return to.

I thought it important to mention this as we all take many things for granted. And, even though we hear of such tragedies almost every day, it really hits home when it's affecting someone you know. Let's all hope that these conditions abate and that no more homes are lost; and more importantly, that no more lives are lost due to these freak bouts with nature. Don, our thoughts are with you and your family - we hope everything turns out for the best.

Until next time...

Gaming Section

Telegames To Release More Games!
Tiger Software Jaguar Offer!
Breakout 2000 Tips/Cheats! PSX Stuff!
And More!!

From the Editor's Controller - Playin' it like it is!

LOTS of interesting stuff this week, especially Jaguar-related. First off, Telegames has announced that they'll be releasing four more games in 1997, as well as two new games for the Lynx! The four games slated for the Jaguar are: Iron Soldier 2 (CD), World Tour Racing (CD), Zero Five, and Worms - one a month starting this month. The Lynx games are: Raiden and Fat Bobby. Dates and prices are included in a blurb later in this section.

If you're fairly active online, especially this past week, you may have seen a post re-printed from info found from Tiger Software. These posts are promoting a special Jaguar package deal as well as a few software bundles. It sounded like Tiger Software came across a BIG cache of Jaguars and software! So....I did a little checking and according to a couple of reliable sources, Tiger Software bought JTS'/Atari's remaining inventory of Jaguars and software! Tiger Software, from what I have heard, is a large liquidator of such items.

So, Tiger Software is pushing these package deals for like \$60-\$70 dollars (I can't recall the exact price offhand) for the Jaguar bundle and \$30 or so for the software bundle (three games each). Not a bad deal if you're looking for a second or third unit, or if you're looking to buy a cheap second system to supplement another. What's surprising about this buyout is that Tiger seems to be promoting the Jaguar as this terrific system with some degree of future. Yes, Telegames has said that there'll be four more games (and maybe more later?), but I don't see a "future" for the Jaguar. If it's not finished, or in the process of being completed, it's doubtful that we'll see any new games being produced beyond a title or two, if that. So, why did they purchase the entire lot? How about an incredible price? How about \$20 per Jaguar and \$1-\$2 per game? Pretty good profit potential if they can unload them! Just thought you'd be interested...

Moving on to Sony and the PlayStation... I'm continuing to hear promotions for the Net Yaroze development system for the PSX. While I don't have any new earth-shattering news about it at the moment, I do know that Sony is actively promoting it and more news should be arriving. In fact, we're in the process of setting up an interview in an effort to learn more of this new development tools package. Stay tuned.

Also, you may remember a few weeks back when we reported the availability of the collectible Alps GamePad, in red. Well, we understand that Alps has expanded their promotion due to the high level of interest that has been shown lately. There are a number of promotions going on online, either to buy the gamepads, or win one. Electronics Boutique has decided to continue its sale at \$39.95. There are also giveaways and promotional contests going on at the Next Generation web site (www.next.generation.com) in which you can win a red gamepad or Wipeout XL. The EB contest is a trivia contest (who is the owner of Imagine Publishing?). Try other sites for giveaways also, such as: www.vgol.com, www.interactive.alps.com, and www.ultragg.com. Good luck!

Plenty of Breakout 2000 tips this week. Also, GamePro's list of the top 10 R.I.P. in the video game industry (guess who's #1??). And, how well did retailers really do this past holiday season? How did we rate the best games played on the Jaguar this past year? And we have more interesting stuff for your reading pleasure this week - enjoy!

Until next time...

Industry News STR Game Console NewsFile - The Latest Gaming News!

Sony To Reorganize PlayStation Operations

TOKYO, JAPAN, 1997 JAN 6 (Newsbytes) -- By Martyn Williams. The various companies around the world responsible for producing Sony's hit PlayStation console and its games are to be brought together.

Shares in Sony Computer Entertainment America, Sony Interactive Studio America, and Sony Computer Entertainment Europe that are currently owned by Sony Corporation of America will be transferred to Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. (SCE), a subsidiary of parent Sony Corporation [TOKYO:6758] [NYSE:SNE] and the company responsible for Japanese PlayStation operations.

At the same time, SCE said total sales are expected to come in at around 340 billion yen (US\$ 2.92 billion) for the fiscal year 1996, which ends in March. From the middle of this year, the company will also begin producing machines for the North American market from a new production line in Mexico at a Sony subsidiary. Exchange rate: \$1 = 116.55 yen

Toys 'R' Us: Holiday sales up 4 percent

PARAMUS, N.J., Jan. 6 (UPI S) -- Toys "R" Us Inc. is reporting that its worldwide holiday sales this year were up 4 percent to \$4.1 billion. But the toy giant says (Monday) that its U.S. sales fell flat despite the release of such hot products as Nintendo 64 and Tickle Me Elmo.

Metrowerks Ships CodeWarrior for PlayStation

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, Macworld Expo--(Canadian Corp News, JANUARY 7, 1997)--Metrowerks Inc., one of the world's leading providers of software development tools, today announced CodeWarrior(R) for PlayStation(TM) DR/2, the newest version of its programming tools for developing games for the PlayStation game console. CodeWarrior for PlayStation is hosted on Windows(R)95/NT and Mac(TM)OS and is authorized by Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

CodeWarrior for PlayStation DR/2 features the full CodeWarrior IDE, a plug-in CodeWarrior C/C++ compiler for MIPS(R) and a selection of integrated graphical format converters for managing game development with the CodeWarrior IDE. Version DR/2 offers programmers much greater stability in the IDE in addition to class browser support for C/C++ and a new diagnostic communications tester program called "DebugCommTester".

"Metrowerks is very pleased to continue to advance its PlayStation tools affording PlayStation developers the same easy-to-use CodeWarrior IDE that has become an industry standard on the Macintosh," said Jean Belanger, chairman and chief executive officer of Metrowerks. "We are committed to furthering our cross-platform tools in the digital entertainment and consumer electronics market."

Report - Games Will Explode In '97

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, U.S.A., 1997 JAN 9 (Newsbytes) -- By Richard Bowers.

Strong growth in 1997 is forecast for the interactive entertainment industry, according to the latest report from DFC Intelligence. DFC Intelligence estimates that the combined annual increase in dollar sales for the top two categories, PC games and software for 32 and 64-bit console systems, could be as much as 60% in 1997. The report says the three mega-hit console systems, Nintendo 64, Sony PlayStation and Sega Saturn, are spurring most of growth, with PC games entering into their own new era of mass marketing acceptance. Speaking to Newsbytes, David Cole, president of DFC Intelligence, said, "Nintendo set the stage for 1997 with its aggressive marketing and year end sales of Nintendo 64. With Nintendo 64 in short supply the other platforms also benefited."

"The Nintendo 64 and Sony PlayStation are almost guaranteed to have continued strong sales," says Cole. The fate of the Sega Saturn is less certain, but the report concludes that 1997 could be the year Sega makes a comeback. "The Saturn is a powerful system with a strong software lineup and the incredible brand name." According to Cole, Sega is behind in the race but "only one hit title and a solid marketing campaign away from making a comeback." "After several years of disappointing software sales,

1997 should see healthy growth in all categories: video games, computer games and educational software," says Cole. This solid growth is likely to continue in 1998. Educational software is another high growth area. For both 1997 and 1998, DFC Intelligence forecasts annual growth in educational software of from 12% to 20%.

According to Cole, the interactive entertainment market is finally stabilizing around three leading console systems and the personal computer. "For the past two years there has been a great deal of confusion caused by the sheer number of competing hardware platforms. Now the weaker systems have been weeded out and consumers are ready to buy." "PC games can now tap into a diverse mass market that cannot yet be found on console systems," says Cole. The report points to the success of titles like Civilization II, Command & Conquer: Red Alert and WarCraft 2. Cole says he is even more encouraged by the success of Mattel's Barbie Fashion Designer, which is a non-traditional hit.

On the downside, the DFC Intelligence report indicates that there are still too many products in the channel, and this causes great pressure on profitability for smaller companies. According to Cole, "just because the industry is growing does not mean it will be any easier to make a profit. There are way too many products being released. The Nintendo 64 is the only system where software titles are almost guaranteed to have strong sales. Unfortunately, the Nintendo 64 is a cartridge-based system, which makes it harder for publishers to make a profit." DFC Intelligence releases the 580 page report, entitled The U.S. Market for Video Games and Interactive Electronic Entertainment, twice a year.

SEGA: Sega Expands Net Link Feature

JAN 9, 1997, M2 Communications - Will it be snowing in New York when my plane lands? Which channel airs "Monday Night Football" in Los Angeles? Who is performing on "The Letterman Show" tonight? The answers are now one click away on Sega Saturn Net Link. Sega of America Wednesday launched a new premium on-line channel for Sega Saturn Net Link that combines up-to-the minute, localized information on news, weather, sports, TV programming, entertainment and many other consumer-interest topics all in one location. Called On-TV from ViewCall America, this personal Internet TV channel is optimized for television display, featuring smooth, flicker-free graphics and content updated 24 hours a day covering nine information and entertainment categories. The On-TV service will be available starting Jan. 27 on Sega Saturn Net Link. Users will receive one month of access free; the subsequent annual charge will be \$39.95 for unlimited use, with special discounts for initial subscribers.

"Sega Saturn Net Link is more than just a Web browser. It was designed to be extensible so we could continually offer new on-line services and experiences to many different categories of users," said Kerry Bradford, Sega Online general manager, Sega of America. "Our newest addition, ViewCall's On-TV service, is like having access to multiple TV channels on one station. It will be a tremendous value to Net Link users as an all-in-one reference for the information most sought after on the Internet." The Sega Saturn Net Link is a 28.8 Kbps modem that turns the Sega Saturn video game console into a TV-based Internet access device. It combines two consumer products in one -- an advanced 32-bit CD-based videogame system with more than 200 games available, and a modem providing full Internet functionality for e-mail and Web surfing for a suggested retail price of \$199.99.

ViewCall America's On-TV Internet service provides fast and easy access to

the information and activities consumers desire most on the Internet in categories including news, sports, entertainment, health, weather, business, kids, travel and columns. Content is customized for Net Link users based on specific area codes, offering accurate local TV program listings, weather reports and news information. ViewCall has a staff of editors who receive, reformat and post information from news sources across the country, such as Reuters New Media, Sports Ticker, USA Today, TVData and American Express Travel Related Services, in the On-TV service 24 hours a day. Users will find On-TV in the "What's New" area of the 3D Net Link city home page. "We're focused on adding real value to the Internet services our partners are providing," said Alan McKeon, president and CEO, ViewCall America. "Any experienced Internet surfer would spend hours trying to find all the information on the Web that we're offering in one location with On-TV."

ViewCall America (www.viewcall.com) is committed to expanding and enhancing the television experience by using the Internet to bring consumers a wide variety of entertainment and services delivered through On-TV. On-TV comes bundled with Internet-TVs, Internet set top boxes, Network Computers and Internet appliances, and works with various Internet TV browsers, thus reflecting the company's open platform philosophy which offers choice to content partners, hardware partners and ultimately, to consumers. Sega of America is the arm of Tokyo-based Sega Enterprises Ltd. responsible for the development, marketing and distribution of Sega videogame systems and videogames in the Americas. Sega Enterprises is a nearly \$3.6 billion company recognized as the industry leader in interactive digital entertainment media, and is the only company that offers interactive entertainment experiences both inside and outside the home. Sega of America's World Wide Web site is located at <http://www.sega.com>.

Jaguar Cheats, & Hints STR InfoFile - Solving Those Riddles!

From CompuServe's Atari Gaming Forums, courtesy of Randy Baer:

Well, since Mario Perdue (programmer of Breakout 2000) recently departed CompuServe, he has given me the ok to list some codes for B2K. All codes are entered during the game with NO BALLS ACTIVE! They work in one or two player modes.

1+5+3 = Ball Count to 99
4+7+8+9 = Catch Power-Up
3+7+8+9 = Attract Power-Up
2+7+8+9 = Cannon Power-Up
1+7+8+9 = Super Ball Power-Up

There are just two more that I know of, and I'll release them at some point in the near future...

Have fun!

Randy

And a confirmation, plus...

Hi,

I found these out as I played B2K last night...

7+8+9+1 = Breakthrough ball
7+8+9+2 = Lightning
7+8+9+3 = Attract
7+8+9+4 = Catch mode
1+3+5 = 99 balls
1+5+7 = skip a set of levels
1+6+7 = skip a single level

Don't cheat to death! Take it easy,

Wes Powell

Jagar Online STR InfoFile - Online Users Growl & Purr!

Here is the revised released date schedule for games being published by Telegames for both the Atari Jaguar and the Atari Lynx. There is still life after Atari Corporation after all folks! :)

Schedule as of January 07 1997

Atari Jaguar

Feb 97 - Iron Soldier II (CD Format)
Mar 97 - World Tour Racing (CD Format)
Apr 97 - Zero 5 (Cartridge Format)
May 97 - Worms (Cartridge Format)

Atari Lynx

Feb 97 - Raiden
Mar 97 - Fat Bobby

According to GamePro magazine:

The Top Ten R.I.P.s in the Video Game Industry

1. Atari Corp.
2. 8-bit SNES
3. Sega CD
4. Sega 32X/32X CD
5. 3DO Multiplayer
6. Turbo Grafx 16
7. NeoGeo/NeoGeo CD
8. CD-i/CD 32
9. Virtual Boy
10. SNES CD (never released)

From: IN%"mh@earthlink.net" "MHZ"
Subj: Atari Underground 1/5/97 UPDATE

Well its official. Telegames has committed to release 2 cd-rom games for the Jaguar. Iron Soldier 2, and World Tour Racing. Only IS2 has an release date, February.

Here is the game description from the Telegames web page.

IRON SOLDIER 2 is the knockout sequel available on CD for Jaguar. Pilot your 42 foot tall mech robot thru 20 new missions against the evil Penta Forces. Dramatically enhanced 3-D graphics create a virtual battlefield with war waged in all 360 degrees. Outfit your mech with combinations of 10 weapons systems and begin your fight against the multitudes of enemy weapons. With full motion video, driving soundtrack, and realistic sfx, all available in stereo or surround sound, this product must be purchased by any true gamer.

MSRP \$59.95 AVAILABLE FEBRUARY

For more info on this game you can goto Telegames web site at
<http://www.telegames.com>
<http://www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/Park/4876/main-page.html>
<http://mars.superlink.net/drkforce>
<http://www.noblecan.org/~maddmaxx/Jaguar>

to /msg other Atari/Jaguar owners try:
<http://www.ataricentral.com/wwwboard/jagtalk.html>
<http://www.magicalfox.com/ken/postit.cgi>

or to talk live with other Atari/Jaguar owners try:
IRC Undernet at #Atari this is the official chat channel of the Jaguar.

Thats all for now. More info to you as i get it.

MHz
MHz@earthlink.net

Sb: Jaguar - Survey Results!
Fm: Larry T./Assoc. Sysop 76710,2174

The votes have been cast and the results are in! Votes cast for games played in 1996 (not necessarily released last year). The best game overall in 1996 for the Atari Jaguar is Tempest 2000 with 28% of the total vote. Defender 2000 was second best with 23% of the total vote.

Category Winners:

The best Sports Title is Brutal Sports Football with 50% of the total vote.

The best Platform/Action Title is Rayman with 57% of the total vote.

The best Adventure/RolePlaying Title is tied with Alien Vs Predator and Towers II each receiving 38% of the total vote.

The best Fighting Title is Ultra Vortek with 60% of the total vote.

The best Simulation Title is Theme Park with 43% of the total vote.

The best Other Title is Breakout 2000 with 40% of the total vote.

Thanks to everyone who participated in this survey!

- Larry Tipton/Associate Sysop
Video Games Forum

PEOPLE... ARE TALKING

On CompuServe

Compiled by Joe Mirando
CIS ID: 73637,2262

Hidi Ho friends and neighbors. Here we are, only two weeks into 1997, with my New Year's Resolution not even out of my lips, and SOMEONE had the nerve to beat me to it!

In case you don't remember, my resolution was to get one of the web browsers for the Atari ST series of computers to work. To be honest, I really haven't had time to get into it any since the first of the year. But Dana Jacobson has. He, with the help of many of our online friends, got CAB/STik to work. If you read his editorial in this issue, you probably know how happy he is to have gotten it working. I'm a bit envious of course, but there is a silver lining... now I can pester Dana when I have a question. <grin>

On another front, I've still had no luck getting the Quantum FireBall to work with an Atari, Supra, AdSCSI+, or LINK host adaptor. I know, I know, it just won't work. It's arbitration. Yeah, like hard drives have a union now or something. <grin> At any rate, it's on its way back to the distributor I bought it from. I'll look for a nice, simple, Seagate or something.

I've also been in contact with a friend from another forum, on a service far, far, away. He uses a PC but wants a backup machine in case his PC decides to stop working again, as it did a few weeks ago. A friend of a friend offered an indefinite loan of an Atari 1040 STF. He asked me if I could supply him with programs and accessories to make it useable. He was bemoaning the fact that it didn't have a hard drive (not really... he just happened to mention it), so I offered to loan him a 40 meg hard drive that would also provide him with a clock (an OLD Seagate 42 meg drive in a Supra shoebox case with HD Driver software). He was quite happy with this and asked if I could "fill it up" with programs and stuff. That part is a piece of cake! HD to HD transfers are easy, cheap, and allow you to see some of the stuff on your hard drive that you've forgotten about. So he's getting a bunch of PD/Shareware/Demo word processors, a slew of PD/Shareware/Demo terminal programs, and a gaggle of games (all downloaded during my long association with CompuServe). I'll just bet that, instead of being a backup machine, it becomes his "second machine". You know... the one that he WANTS to use, not HAS to use. Time will tell.

Well, let's find out what's going on here on CompuServe.

From the Atari Computing Forums

Kevin Sheridan asks: "[Does] anyone know how to avoid a string overflow when getting new messages with QUICKCIS? Also, does anyone know why the program changes my internal clock to odd years ie. 12/17/47?

My pal Myles Cohen tells Kevin:

"That probably means that there is not enough space in the memory to display all of the messages that came in...

To get more memory...Easy if you have a program like XBOOT...you must bypass all the extraneous progs in the AUTO folder to free up more memory...reset the computer...get back into QCIS and voila...there are all the messages you couldn't read before...

Alternate way: You might be able to view the message area directly with a program like DCSSHOWER...or by loading that particular message area into a text reader like EDITPLUS or EDHAK... Probably the fault of the newer Compuserve software...or maybe even something in QCIS that sends the computer to the area of memory to check the current date in your computer...if your clock battery is no longer working...it finds the date that the software was written...(I'm just guessing)"

Kevin tells Myles:

"I'm running on a Mega/STE with 4 Meg memory so I wouldn't think memory should be a problem. I'm just running the "normal call" to get E-mail when it gives me the string overflow. It seems to have something to do with the header info in the E-mail itself that the program doesn't know what to do with.

The battery on my computer is still working however when I log in using quickcis it "corrects" the time based on something it finds on Compuserve and isn't doing it right. Oh well. Any hope for a new HMI graphic package for the Atari?"

Myles tells Kevin:

"I have a MegaSTE with 4 megs and the string overflow happens when there are too many messages to display...I told you how I solve it...but here is another trick I just learned from oe Roborecky... Don't ever do a "NORMAL" call if you have your QUICKCIS.CNF file set up to visit MAIL...instead, use "MANUAL" ...then when the program stops...press the ALT and N keys. The "normal" call used to work with the old CIS software...and still does if you don't have MAIL in your CNF file...It is hard to change old habits...and my hand automatically reaches for the normal N but your problem should go away if you choose M (for Manual) instead...

HMI?? Sorry...I don't even know what that means...or what it's for...I know that there have been some messages in this forum wishing for it...but they never seem to explain what it's for or why they want it... And so...I'll live in blissful ignorance...unless you'd like to clue me in..."

Jack Hughes jumps in and adds his experiences:

"I too have 4M of memory on my STf. Just checked and there are 2.4M free. And I have experienced the overflow problem twice recently. But not in mail but getting msgs from Forum (Beer) and not on this or any other Forum. It also screws up the msgs when I used Stalker to get them. This is the problem that really bugs me. Sometimes it sets the date to that of my TOS (Apr 6, 1989) and other times it's today's date but the year is 1947!!! That surely can't be the date of the CIS operating system, but then maybe it is. :-) The way things are now I try to "Touch" the bad date files with ST Tools once a day."

David Schmudde asks for help (go get 'em, Dana <g>):

"Does anybody have translations for the pull down menus in CAB, some are pretty easy to figure out and others I am having problems with. Can I view 256 color pics in CAB, they all look grainy. I am using CAB030 for my TT Also, is there anyway to steal text off of CAB? For example, in multi-tasking Oses (System 7, Win), I highlight, cut and paste in a notepad... is there any program I can cut/paste with CAB?"

Jack Hughes tells David:

"I'm just getting started into CAB but my copy has English titles. Assume that's what you want. Also available are German and French. Got this in Library 2, WWW130.ZIP. I may be in error, but think it's the latest. Includes a bunch of goods. Can't help on your other problem."

David Schmudde asks about a terminal program:

"I have been using the STalker demo and am impressed... however, I am wondering if Flash or another terminal program is better. Where is the best place to buy these programs now?"

Dana Jacobson tells David:

"I'd suggest that you try the Flash II demo here and decide for yourself which is "better". It's all subjective in this case; some people will always prefer one program over another. As to where to buy, Flash can be purchased from Missionware, represented here by John Trautschold. Or, your favorite mail order local dealer.<g>"

Joe Villarreal tells David:

"A terminal program is mainly a matter of preference; features you like using. I have probably tried twenty or more different terminal programs running on different operating systems like CP/M,DOS, TRSDOS, LSIDOS, OS-9/OSK, TOS, and MS-DOS. Now, if I could take my favorite features and place them in a terminal program, that would be the best terminal program for me <g>."

I have used Stalker 3.06/Steno 2.12 for a couple of years now and has worked great. I am using it with the Nova graphics card; most of the time in a 640x480 256 color screen. With this resolution I can see a 54 line screen with 9 point characters. Grifnif sells Stalker and Steno. I have tried the Flash II demo and it seems to work well."

David Schmudde, now out for a killer system, asks:

"What is the best multi-tasking program on the market for my TT030? Where can I order MiNT from.... what exactly is MiNT?"

Phil Walding tells David:

"MiNT should be available for d/l'ing from on-line services. It was utilised as the core for MultiTOS, but the original author continued development of the MiNT package. If you want a good multi-tasking OS, you can look to Geneva / Neodesk or Magic / Ease. Magic ~~is faster and offers pre-emptive multi tasking, while Geneva is believed to be more compatible but only offers co-operative multi tasking. Personally, I prefer Geneva / Neodesk and I've run mu Mega4STe to about 200k of ram free with about 5 programs running with no problems and excellent co-operation. Personally, I don't like Ease as much as Neodesk and I don't think the program manager in Magic is as easy to work with as Geneva's."

I jump in and tell Phil and David:

"Be aware that you can now run MiNT and use Geneva as its GEM interface. This provides Geneva with the ability to multi-task in pre-emptive mode. It does slow the system down a bit, but for those who believe that they

need pre-emptive multi-tasking, it is an option. Installation is as simple as inserting MiNT into the AUTO folder and specifying GENEVA as its GEM Shell. From there, I have GENEVA load NeoDesk and away I go."

David replies:

"Excuse me for being stupid, but what exactly is pre-emptive multitasking? I do notice the difference between multitasking in Geneva and MS-DOS vs. OS/2, Windows, Multi-TOS etc.."

Before I can reply, James Spielman tells David:

"In pre-emptive multi-tasking (as in OS/2 and others), the _OS_ determines how much of the CPU time an application will receive. This allows a "fair" distribution of time among all executing applications. In co-operative multi-tasking, the OS leaves it up to each _application_ to decide when to give up CPU time for any other applications. In other words, if an application's programmer decides their application rates more CPU time, the app will hog the CPU. All that's rather simplified, as there is often other processes (such as "threads") that make up an application's actual execution."

A short time after James fills David in, I add my own little missive:

"There are no stupid questions here... only unanswered ones. In its stand-alone 'mode', Geneva uses co-operative multi-tasking... It waits until an application makes an AES call and demands CPU time. Pre-emptive multi-tasking is when the OS (MiNT in this case) doles out CPU time in rotation. This results in slower system performance, but is required by some programs for correct operation. Under 'stock' Geneva, the CPU would dole out time something like this:

```
>Calligrapher requests CPU time to reformat a page<
!CPU gives Calligrapher CPU time!
>STeno sits in background taking no CPU time<
!CPU gives Calligrapher idle CPU time!
>User switches to STeno<
!CPU gives STeno idle CPU time!
>STeno requests CPU time to reformat a page<
!CPU gives STeno CPU time!
```

With MiNT, the CPU distributes CPU time like a Merry-Go-Round:

```
>CPU gives Calligrapher CPU time to reformat a page<
>CPU gives STeno CPU time to do... nothing<
>User switches to STeno<
>CPU gives Calligrapher CPU time to do... nothing<
>CPU gives STeno CPU time to reformat page<
>CPU gives Calligrapher CPU time to do... nothing<
```

As you can see, applications that spend most of their time in the background waiting for something to happen can take cycles away from active applications, but do allow processing to continue at a more steady pace. You can also 'prioritize' tasks so they get more time per each cycle, but that can result in even more system slowdown. The above example is a gross simplification, to be sure, but it will give you an idea of the differences. By the way, MiNTNP.PRG (v1.12) is provided with Geneva."

Well folks, that's about it for this week. Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

EDITORIAL QUICKIES

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IT USUALLY SAYS..
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